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The Collapse of Tokugawa Japan and the role of Sir Ernest Satow in the Meiji Restoration, 1853-1869

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**The Collapse of Tokugawa Japan and the role of
Sir Ernest Satow in the Meiji Restoration, 1853-1869**

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Submitted for the degree of Master of Philosophy

October, 2015

Declaration

I confirm that the research contained in this thesis is in my own research and is submitted as such for the degree of Master of Philosophy.

Tsuyoshi Sakakibara

Abstract

The main argument relates to an analysis of the essays written by Ernest Mason Satow in 1866, known as *Eikoku Sakuron* in Japanese, and also to an analysis of British diplomacy at the time of the civil war and during the Meiji Restoration in 1868-69. The major reason why these two areas should be examined is that the common understanding of them, which Japanese historiography has traditionally defined as historical truth, turns out not to be true. The main idea, which it was planned to argue in this thesis, was to emphasise the efforts of Satow during the Meiji Restoration, because Japanese historiography has consistently defined *Eikoku Sakuron* as the milestone for Japanese political modernization. In other words without Satow, nineteenth-century Japanese could never have promoted their remarkable national transformation. This modernization was connected with British diplomacy. Japanese historiography asserts that thanks to the British, who had supported the anti-feudal forces, the Japanese could found their modern state in such a short period. These two historical assumptions are viewed as common sense even in present Japanese society.

However, through this research, it must now be recognised that the tenets defined by orthodox Japanese historiography cannot be accepted in wider academic argument, because what the Japanese have always believed is largely refuted by British and other sources. Regarding *Eikoku Sakuron*, although it was read by some Japanese, it did not create a huge psychological

impact in nineteenth-century Japan. Satow's argument was revolutionary, but it can hardly be defined as the guideline for eventual modernization. So why has Japanese historiography clung to its ideas and definition? When this question was asked, the direction for this thesis became established.

The Japanese interpretation of the Meiji Restoration was established not to pursue historical truth but to justify political actions. In Japanese historiography, there is a tendency that when historians discuss the Meiji Restoration, they revere it unconditionally, whereas when discussing feudalism, they do not analyse it fairly. The Meiji Restoration will be argued more objectively in this thesis. It will become the opportunity to challenge traditional Japanese historiography.

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Preface

The history of Japan's political transformation in the late nineteenth century has been written many times. A largely closed and feudal society at the time of Commodore Perry's (1794-1858) visit in 1853, within 15 years its governmental structure was revolutionised and many of the assumptions which Japanese people held, both about their internal social relationships and their national identity, were significantly questioned. It is commonplace that the Tokugawa Shogunate failed to cope with the crises in Japan caused by the arrival of the foreigners, and that its enemies, particularly in the southern provinces, sought to exploit its evident weakness in their own bid for power. Perry's initial communications caused confusion within the government, yet these early contacts did not in themselves undermine the regime. By 1858, however, the government of the Shogun (Tycoon) had been pressed into treaty agreements to open important ports to international commerce, thereby threatening internal economic stability and a breakdown of public order. Impotent to expel the foreigners, increasingly discredited among sections of a feudal nobility effectively independent within their own domains, and unable to prevent a resurgent and violent nationalist movement which saw disorder in the capital and attacks on foreign residents, the Shogunate delayed the inevitable by means of the London Protocol in 1862 – effectively postponing the opening of major ports for a further five years.

For the Tycoon, though, the crisis would not go away. His standing as the ruler of Japan was beginning to be doubted, both by the Western powers who had signed treaties with his government and, more alarmingly, by elements within Japan. Was his regime fit to defend the nation? A diplomatic rift with Britain following the death of a merchant led to a naval bombardment of Kagoshima in 1863. Shimonoseki was likewise attacked in 1864 after foreign shipping had been fired on from shore installations. In 1865 a combined naval demonstration, led by the British, compelled a treaty ratification which the Japanese had wished to avoid. Increasingly isolated in Edo, the last of the Tokugawa Shoguns renounced his political status in November 1867; within weeks, the nation was plunged into a civil war. The victors in this struggle were the rulers and samurais of Satsuma (modern Kagoshima) and Choshu (modern Yamaguchi) who had rallied around the imperial bloodline. Consigned for centuries to political obscurity in Kyoto, the Imperial Court thereby emerged in 1868 at the head of a new political model for Japan in what has always been known as the Meiji Restoration. In 1869 all feudal lords returned their hereditary fiefs to the Emperor. In 1871 they were ordered to leave their territories, receiving, as compensation, noble titles under the new regime. Japan was fast developing as a centralised state.

Important questions arise from this narrative, many of them related to the understanding of events held by subsequent generations of the Japanese themselves. Where did mid nineteenth-century ideas for constitutional change come from? And what was the role of foreign,

particularly British, diplomatic intervention in bringing about these profound changes? Japanese historiography has been consistent on these points, long ascribing a crucial contribution to the development of political understanding among educated Japanese to essays written in 1866 by a young translator at the British Legation - Ernest Satow. In the 1860s, too, British diplomacy was supposedly sympathetic to the restoration of imperial authority and thereby instrumental in ending the feudal administration of the Tokugawa clan. In both scholarship and popular perspective, these fundamental assumptions have stood the test of time and have for long been accepted as historical truths, yet the documentary evidence for both is either non-existent or else too often dependent on subsequent and politically-inspired distortions of events and motives.

This thesis aims to test these inherited truths. It is thus not concerned simply with telling the story of how Japan emerged into international politics and the world economy in the mid nineteenth century. It is as much concerned with the making and transmission of Japanese historiography as it is with unravelling the complexities of Japanese history between 1853 and 1868. It will attempt to establish what is real and what might more usefully be regarded as imaginary during these two turbulent decades which forged the modern nation state. It examines how and why the Japanese population and Japanese scholarship came to believe so much that has been proved, by this research, to be in many instances little more than a reassuring version of their past.

During the work for this thesis I have received assistance from many staff in archives and libraries in both Japan and Britain and I thank them all. However, I owe a particular debt to Mr Noboru Koyama, head of the Japanese department at the University Library in Cambridge, who was most generous with his time when making available to me the Japanese documents and other research material acquired by that library in the early part of the twentieth century. I am indebted also to Dr Paul Readman in the History department at King's College London for his advice, particularly in the final stages of my work. And, of course, I am grateful for the guidance of my supervisor, Professor David McLean, throughout the three years of my research.

Chapter I: Introduction

Ernest Satow (1843-1929) was one of Britain's leading diplomats in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He was also acknowledged in both China and Japan as a prominent oriental scholar. Satow's fascination with the Far East developed early in life; even at the age of 17, as a student at University College London, his ambition was to go out to Asia. In 1861, he declined the opportunity for further study at Cambridge in order to apply for admission to the Foreign Office as an interpreter. Satow was accepted, went out to China for training, and in 1862 arrived in Japan. Nigel Brailey rightly concluded that:

Satow's claim to be Britain's greatest ever Japanophile goes right back to the point at which, according to his own account, he decided he wanted a Japan career.¹

Satow worked continually at the British Legation in Japan until 1869. He was in the country, therefore, during some of the most turbulent years in modern Japanese history in which the old political order, based essentially on its traditional feudal social structure, gradually fell apart. He returned there after leave in 1870, witnessing now the early years of the new Meiji regime. He was moved to Siam in 1884 where he remained until 1887. From 1889 to 1893 he was posted to Uruguay, and then to Morocco, until he returned to Tokyo as British Minister in 1895. Although the earlier commercial treaty had already been renegotiated and revised in 1894,

¹ Nigel Brailey, 'Sir Ernest Satow, Japan and Asia: The trials of a diplomat in the age of high imperialism', *The Historical Journal*, 35, 1 (1992), 116.

between 1895 and 1900 Satow was still able to strengthen Anglo-Japanese ties and he was still in Tokyo when the system of extraterritoriality was officially abolished in 1899. His final appointment was to China, as British Minister, after the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. He retired from the diplomatic service in 1906, thereafter devoting his time to writing. Among his works, the best known was his book *A Guide to Diplomatic Practice* in 1917. Although not generally regarded as an original work, it remained for decades a manual in matters of diplomatic practice, areas of international law, and the conduct of international relations between the world's major nations. It was revised several times prior to its fifth edition in 1979.²

The main purpose of this thesis, however, is not consider Satow's activities or reputation as a senior British diplomat in both Japan and China at the height of his career in the 1890s and 1900s. This research will focus on his early years in Japan in the 1860s where he had the opportunity to be, at least to some extent, a participant in the upheavals of Japanese politics. Such a study is valuable, not only in its own right, but also in the context of Britain's growing association with Japan after the country began the process of opening to foreign trade and Western influence from the mid 1850s onwards. From the first years of Western trade at Japanese ports, Britain was Japan's most important commercial partner. In 1860, 55 per cent of Western vessels trading at Yokohama were British—71 per cent in 1861 and

² Satow's career and writings are discussed in Thomas Otte, *A Guide to Diplomacy: The writings of Sir Ernest Satow*, (Leicester, 1996). There is a biographical account specifically of Satow's diplomatic career relating to Japan in Peter Kornicki, 'Ernest Mason Satow', in Hugh Cortazzi and Gordon Daniels (eds.), *Britain and Japan 1859-1991: themes and personalities*, (London, 1991), 76-85.

81 per cent by 1862.³ In the following decades British investment became important for Japan's early industrialization; indeed, without its ties with British trade and finance it is unlikely that Japan could have transformed itself so rapidly.

Comparable ties with Britain existed in the wider political and international arena: both nations had strategic interests in the Pacific. For much of the nineteenth century British diplomacy had sought to limit Russian influence in the Balkans, in central Asia, and along the northern frontiers of the Indian empire. By the late nineteenth century that anxiety extended also to the Far East where the British Government became worried about Russian expansion eastwards. By 1860 Russia had seized the vast Amur and Ussuri territories from China and founded the port of Vladivostok on the Pacific coast. Even Japan might be in danger. In 1860 the British Ambassador in St. Petersburg warned his government of Russian designs on the northern island of Hokkaido.⁴ Russia moved into the Ili Valley on the north-west borders of China in the early 1880s and, equally alarming, began her construction of the trans-Siberian railway in 1891. Swift and militarily significant communication with the Pacific would now bring northern China, especially the province of Manchuria, within Russia's reach.

The perceived Russian threat to Britain's trading and political supremacy in the Far East made Japan appear increasingly important.

³ Yuzo Kato, 'The Opening of Japan and the Meiji Restoration, 1837-72', in Ian Nish and Yoichi Kibata (eds.), *The History of Anglo-Japanese Relations: Vol. I., The Political-Diplomatic Dimension, 1600-1930*, (London, 2000), 75.

⁴ *Dai Nihon Kobunsho—Bakumatsu Gaikoku Kankei Bunsho, Vol. 43* (University of Tokyo Press, 1991), 11.

Hence co-operating with Japan was not just economic. In the late nineteenth century Japan emerged as a naval force in the region and the British soon came to recognise that good relations with a nation itself wary of Russia was to mutual advantage. For their own strategic reasons the Japanese were determined to thwart Russian encroachments into Korea, while they saw Manchuria as an area where their own developing economic and international political ambitions might be fulfilled. In 1894-5 Japan crushed China in war, both on land and at sea. The Treaty of Shimonoseki which followed marked the rise of Japan as a Pacific power and hence as a most useful ally for Britain.⁵ The Anglo-Japanese agreement of 1902 was the first of Britain's international accords in the early twentieth century. *Ententes* with France and Russia followed in 1904 and 1907 but it was the Japanese alliance which marked the end of Britain's long-held stance of splendid isolation in diplomacy.

This new study of Anglo-Japanese relations in their earliest years is thus important because it throws more light on a relationship which influenced global international relations up to and beyond the First World War. This thesis will analyse those early years and in particular the influence of Satow, particularly through two essays which he wrote in 1866 and which were published in *The Japan Times* on 16 March and 19 May. The main task is to assess how important Satow's essays became for the

⁵ For recent analyses of this theme, see Yuichi Inoue, 'From Unequal Treaty to the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1867-1902', Shigeru Murashima, 'The Opening of the Twentieth Century and the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1895-1923', and David Steeds, 'Anglo-Japanese Relations, 1902-23: A Marriage of Convenience', all in Ian Nish and Yoichi Kibata (eds.), *The History of Anglo-Japanese Relations: Vol. I*, 131-158, 159-196, and 197-223.

Japanese in terms of their subsequent modernization. A re-examination of the diplomatic relationship between Britain and Japan during the Restoration period will thereby also be undertaken.

Why should Satow's essays be studied? It is to challenge traditional academic ideas by proposing a new one, and then to determine whether that new idea is academically acceptable. Of course, the main purpose of this thesis is to establish the truth, not to disparage Satow's reputation or political achievements. However, while researching his diplomatic activities during the Restoration period several facts have emerged which are not consistent with what Japanese historiography has always defined as common knowledge. After considering the reason and background to that, there emerged one conclusion: Satow's diplomatic activities and opinions in the 1860s were never evaluated from a fair perspective. This research aims to explain why in Japan that has been so. In so doing it is necessary to reconsider British diplomacy with Japan during the Meiji Restoration period, because in Japanese historiography all Satow's diplomatic activities were considered to represent the British Legation's policy.

During the research, the direction of this thesis had changed. Initially, its main theme was to define the role of Satow during the Restoration period, and, by emphasising his importance, to identify him as a major contributor to Japanese modernization. In Japan, he has always been highly evaluated and the Japanese generally have considered that without him, nineteenth-century Japanese could never have understood the essence of modernization. However, in the middle of the research those notions were

abandoned, because Satow's standing as defined within Japanese historiography cannot be proved by British official documents and a range of other primary materials. A new purpose for this thesis thereby emerged. Why do modern Japanese esteem him so much without sufficient proof? By analysing Satow's works and the political background to the Meiji Restoration, a new understanding about him will be created.

How was this high evaluation of Satow formed? Certainly, eyewitnesses, both British and Japanese, honoured him. Algernon B. Mitford (1837-1916), who worked with him at the British Legation in the 1860s, claimed that Satow supplanted traditional Dutch ties with the Japanese by thoroughly researching Japanese history and traditions.⁶ He concluded that the British Minister, Harry Parkes (1828-85), had then been able to promote British diplomacy more efficiently because he was supported by the able Satow.⁷ Also, according to Bernard Allen, a contemporary who followed Satow's career, the Japanese minister of Foreign Affairs, Higashikuze Michitomi, wrote a letter to Satow when the latter returned to London on leave in 1868. In it, he showed great appreciation for Satow's contribution to the Meiji Restoration.⁸

Satow's reputation was further strengthened by his essays. The essays which he had written in *The Japan Times* were edited as a pamphlet and sold to the public. As a result, these essays were known as *Eikoku Sakuron*,

⁶ Lord Redesdale, *Memories, Vol. I* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1915), 377.

⁷ Ibid., 377.

⁸ Bernard Allen, *The Rt. Hon. Sir Ernest Satow* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1933), 79.

which means the British diplomacy in Japanese.⁹ After this, he became well known among Japanese and his essays held a large psychological impact. The main argument of *Eikoku Sakuron* was to suggest the foundation of a new regime for the purpose of establishing good diplomatic relations with the Western states.¹⁰ His proposal was revolutionary for nineteenth-century Japanese, because in 1866 they remained under the domination of the Tycoon and, for them, feudalism was essential to maintain the Japanese national administration. Since Matthew Perry's arrival in 1853, the Japanese began to have diplomatic relations with the West and also, from 1858, they established commercial relations. As a result, especially in commercial aspects, it was becoming apparent that feudalism itself was outdated. The Japanese innovated step by step to keep up with international diplomacy and commerce, but the existence of the Tycoon's Government was always the precondition for innovation and nineteenth-century Japanese had no sense of national administration without it. Thus, *Eikoku Sakuron* was judged to provide a huge insight for the Japanese. Indeed, two years after the publication of Satow's essays the Japanese had begun a civil war and within a short period the Shogunate was overthrown. Reviewing these historical events, the Japanese concluded that Satow and *Eikoku Sakuron* were necessary for the Meiji Restoration. Modern Japanese historiography is based on that attitude.

⁹ Ian Ruxton, *The Diaries and Letters of Sir Ernest Mason Satow (1843-1929)-A Scholar-Diplomat in Japan* (The Edwin Mellen Press, 1998), 50.

¹⁰ Grace Fox, *Britain and Japan* (Oxford at the Clarendon press, 1969), 179.

Yet at the same time, Japanese have also criticised Satow's activities because he interfered in Japanese domestic affairs. The main representative of this idea is Tokutomi Soho (1863-1957), who lived in the same era as Satow and who is a major contributor to Japanese historiography. In fact, Tokutomi has been judged to be a major Japanese scholar who contributed not only to establishing a Japanese historiography but also to establishing the common academic interpretation of the Meiji Restoration. Thus, he was defined as follows:

Tokutomi was one of the most prodigious historians of modern Japan, and certainly one of its most brilliant stylists.¹¹

He reviewed the Meiji Restoration; he had already recognised that the Mikado could be the symbol of unification for establishing the modern Japanese state at the time of the Meiji Restoration.¹² He then concluded that the unbreakable line of the Imperial family was not only the symbol of Japanese unification but also the main essence of Japanese thinking in the search for identity or when honouring Japanese nationality, especially in the event of a national crisis.¹³ In consequence, Tokutomi became recognised as the back-bone of modern Japanese political culture.¹⁴ When the Japanese have argued about their culture, his statements and analysis are always

¹¹ Peter Duss, 'Whig History, Japanese Style: The Min'yusha Historians and the Meiji Restoration', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 33, 3 (1974), 420.

¹² Ken Yonehara, *Tokutomi Soho—Nihon Nationalism no Kiseki* (Tokyo: Chuo Kouron Shinsha, 2003), 170.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 170.

¹⁴ Yasuo Hattori, *Tokutomi Soho Ko* (Kyoto: Doushisha Kouronsha, 1980), 3.

cited by historians.¹⁵ In 1936 he wrote an essay in which he pointed out the secret relationship between Satow and the Satsuma samurai, Saigo Takamori (1828-77). Saigo is recognised as one of the three heroes of the Meiji Restoration. According to Tokutomi, during their conversation Satow was said to have told Saigo: “please take care of the matter as best you can”.¹⁶ Because Saigo had anticipated Satow’s intention to say such a thing, he was said not to have replied.¹⁷

What was the background to Tokutomi writing about the above episode? Essentially, when modern Japanese academics discuss diplomatic relationships during the Meiji Restoration period, the following structure is held to be obvious: the British supported the rulers of Satsuma and Choshu, while the French supported the Tycoon’s Government. On that assumption, some modern Japanese have defined Satow as a British spy, and Tokutomi’s episode contributed to that theory. In fact, from that episode, the Japanese historian Kiyoshi Inoue honoured Saigo as heroic Japanese who possessed a well developed sense of nationalism.¹⁸ Inoue’s opinion suggests that the British Legation tried to provoke a civil war by sending Satow to the major Japanese samurais; the intention was to establish a puppet regime. By interpreting British diplomacy in this way some Japanese have criticised Satow severely, with the result that there are also several negative ideas about *Eikoku Sakuron*. Yet one thing is clear: both ideas share the same

¹⁵ Ibid., 1.

¹⁶ Soho Tokutomi, *Meiji Ishin to Edo Bakufu, Vol. II* (Tokyo: Koudansha Gakujyutsu Bunko, 1979), 275.

¹⁷ Ibid., 275.

¹⁸ Kiyoshi Inoue, *Nihon Gendaishi I, Meiji Ishin* (University of Tokyo Press, 2001), 255.

belief that without Satow, the Japanese could not have achieved modernization. Furthermore, *Eikoku Sakuron* became a milestone for it.

There is no doubt about Satow's place based on an analysis through *Eikoku Sakuron*, but, from a different perspective, there emerges another idea: whether, indeed, Satow should be seen at all as a major British figure during the Restoration. The reason is that his name was not written in Japanese official documents. In fact the first date when his name appears in official documents of the Tycoon's Government was 9 October 1865.¹⁹ And, even then, the reference was not about diplomacy but merely to the negotiation about constructing a new house for the British consul in Hakodate because the old house had burned down.²⁰ It was no doubt a worthy topic, but could hardly be defined as an important negotiation in which Satow had represented the British Legation. Because Satow had arrived in Japan in 1862, traditional Japanese historiography might suggest that Satow's name should have appeared earlier. Furthermore, as Mitford wrote, Satow had mastered Japanese, so he should have been noticed before 1865. However, Japanese official documents refute that notion, which challenges the established idea of Satow's significance.

Also, in *Eikoku Sakuron* itself, there emerges a new reason to challenge established assumptions: can all Satow's ideas in there be truly defined as original? The following facts are the background to that question.

¹⁹ Shigetoshi Kusuya, *Ernest Satow no Dokusho Note* (Tokyo: Yushodo Shuppan, 2009), 223.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 223.

First, in 1861, the British vice-admiral Hope sent a report to the Admiralty in which he cited a well-known pamphlet, the main topic of which was: “The Tycoon is not a sovereign of Japan”. Secondly, in March 1866, when Satsuma samurai, Matsuki Kouan, proposed his idea for future diplomatic relations between Britain and Japan when he was in London, most of his ideas were the same as those which were discussed in *Eikoku Sakuron*. Furthermore, he proposed them just a few days apart from when Satow wrote in *The Japan Times*. *Eikoku Sakuron* and Matsuki’s proposals were confirmed as citing the same material, which was British Minister Rutherford Alcock’s memorandum in 1864. Thirdly, a Prussian mission visited and stayed in Japan from 1860-61. It was just for six months, but when its staff published a book in 1864 they insisted that the Tycoon was not the representative of Japan. Finally, a Swiss diplomat, Aime Humbert, visited Japan in 1864. He stayed ten months in Japan but in the same year, when he published a book, he likewise insisted that the Tycoon was not the national sovereign of Japan.

The one common point among the above facts is that before Satow wrote *Eikoku Sakuron* there were already Westerners who claimed that the Tycoon was not the national sovereign of Japan. Also, in the case of Matsuki, it was hard to conclude that the timing was just coincidence. Thus, it can be argued that Satow’s idea in *Eikoku Sakuron* was not his own and that he just edited ideas which already existed.

Why, then, did only Satow’s ideas spread among the Japanese? The obvious reason was that his ideas were translated into Japanese, whereas

Hope's report and Alcock's memorandum were official documents and so would not be published. Likewise, the books written by the Prussian staff and Humbert in 1864 were not translated into Japanese in the 1860s, thereby denying nineteenth-century Japanese an opportunity to read them. By contrast, Satow himself actually described the process of translating his essays into Japanese,²¹ and recorded the episode when the former feudal lord of Uwajima, Date Munenari (1818-92), told him that he had read *Eikoku Sakuron*.²² Because *Eikoku Sakuron* was translated, the Japanese not unnaturally concluded that everything in Satow's essays was his own original analysis. This notion remains in modern times, hence the need to challenge perceptions about *Eikoku Sakuron*.

Then, of course, Satow's role means a reconsideration of diplomacy at the British Legation during the Restoration period. Had the British Legation been working to establish a puppet regime after the civil war? Evidence for why modern Japanese have interpreted diplomatic relations in this way comes from a book in 1917 by Shibusawa Eiichi (1840-1931), formerly a samurai of the Tycoon's Government. In it, he wrote: by requesting British support, the Daimio and samurais of Satsuma tried to achieve their ends, and that by the same method the Tycoon's Government was dependent on France.²³ Shibusawa was on the staff when the last Shogun, Tokugawa Yoshinobu (1837-1913), sent his younger brother, Akitake, to Europe as his

²¹ Ernest Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan* (London: Seeley, Service & Co. Ltd., 1921), 159.

²² *Ibid.*, 179.

²³ Eiichi Shibusawa, *Tokugawa Yoshinobukou Den, Vol. III* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1967), 253.

deputy in 1867. After the foundation of the Meiji Government, Shibusawa's efforts were acknowledged and he became recognised as a founder of Japanese capitalism. Since this major figure had so analysed diplomatic relations during the Restoration period, Japanese historiography became heavily influenced thereafter by referring to his analysis. It developed as the major premise within Japanese historiography, and an argument about the possibility of colonisation at the time of the Restoration thereby began.

In modern Japan, the principal assumption about the Meiji Restoration is that the country faced the danger of colonisation, implying that without a rapid promotion of modernization Japan would be colonised by Western states. Furthermore, during the ensuing struggle to modernize both the British and French were involved in domestic affairs through their support of either Satsuma-Choshu or the Tycoon's Government. How did this idea become so commonly accepted in modern Japanese historiography? One historian, Akira Tanaka, explained it in his 2007 book. According to him, it started in 1951 when Shigeki Tohyama published a book asserting that although in an economic respect there was a possibility of subordination to Western states, nevertheless in political and military terms there was no danger of colonisation.²⁴ To counter-argue, the historian Kiyoshi Inoue published a book in the same year emphasising the possibility of colonisation by pointing out various historical facts.²⁵ Since 1951 many historians have discussed the possibility of colonisation, with the majority on Inoue's side.

²⁴ Akira Tanaka, *Bakumatsu Ishin-shi no Kenkyu* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Koubunkan, 1996), 67-70.

²⁵ Ibid., 67-70.

Then, in 1981, when Takuji Shibahara published his book, the matter seemed to be settled. He supported Inoue and criticised Tohyama, and formulated a historical theory about the possibility of colonisation.²⁶ The debate ended when Tohyama conceded some of the ideas of Inoue.²⁷

However, can diplomatic relations in the Restoration period be so simply defined? Several historians have questioned that idea: Takashi Ishii is one of them.²⁸ He claimed in 1961 that the major intention of Western diplomacy towards Japan was to establish a market for selling products and purchasing materials.²⁹ By stressing that, he concluded that the Westerners had expected to undermine feudalism in Japan which would otherwise reject the growth of capitalism.³⁰ He claimed, though, that the Westerners had no intention of colonising the Japanese mainland, although his idea is not accepted in Japanese historiography.

The above historical debate at least demonstrated one thing: that Japanese scholars had already defined the diplomacy of the British Legation and felt no need for any reconsideration. However, after the research in this thesis, it becomes apparent that to subscribe to existing Japanese historiography will be impossible. One major reason is because the Japanese do not cite any British materials. British records contain no accounts which support what the Japanese have regarded as common sense. As a result, the Japanese interpretation of British diplomacy collapses. In January 1868,

²⁶ Ibid., 67-70.

²⁷ Ibid., 67-70.

²⁸ Ibid., 67-70.

²⁹ Takashi Ishii, *Meiji Ishin Ron* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Koubunkan, 1961), 136.

³⁰ Ibid., 136.

after the Battle of Toba-Fushimi when the civil war started, Lord Stanley, as Foreign Secretary, sent the following direction to Parkes:

Her Majesty's Government desired that you should remain neutral in regard to internal strife, and confine yourself to requiring from whatever party may be in the ascendant a strict observance of Treaties, and protection for British subjects and their property.³¹

Stanley clearly wrote nothing about involvement in any civil war. He also, judging from this statement, made it apparent that the British Government was only concerned about upholding the 1858 Treaty and protecting the property of British subjects. This thesis will not only reconsider British diplomacy but also the background to why the Japanese were compelled to define as common knowledge things which could not be supported from any British point of view. By doing so, it will be possible not only to reappraise Japanese historiography but also to assess British diplomacy more fairly.

How does British historiography, and how do present British historians, analyse Japan of the Meiji Restoration period? In his essay of 1997, Alan Macfarlane claimed that there were several common issues between Britain and Japan after analysing points of geography, national governance, demography and their histories.³² The following was his conclusion:

³¹ National Archives, London, Foreign Office Records, FO881/1727, Stanley to Parkes, 8 April 1868.

³² Alan Macfarlane, 'Japan in an English Mirror', *Modern Asian Studies*, 31, 4 (1997), 775-795.

If the Armada off England or the fleets of the Mongols off Japan had not been destroyed by storms, if William had not conquered England or Perry arrived in Japan, their histories would have been very different.³³

This suggested that for British and other Western historians the Meiji Restoration was nothing but an inevitable historical procedure to establish a new society, since both British and Japanese history possessed some common historical trends. Thus, although for the Japanese the Meiji Restoration may have been an unpredictable event, it was not so surprising for the British. This underlying attitude could be one aspect of the British point of view concerning the Meiji Restoration.

As part of the background to the Meiji Restoration, Japanese historiography assumed that because the Tycoon's Government had undertaken successive diplomatic failures, the Japanese mainland was threatened by the Western states. Nineteenth-century Japanese thus recognised that the old structure of feudalism would have to be overthrown. This attitude provided the justification for Satsuma and Choshu to establish the modern state by defining the Mikado as the national sovereign of Japan. This line of analysis points towards the conclusion that either the arrival of Perry in 1853 or the signing of the commercial treaties in 1858 was the turning point in Japanese history.

This analysis could be deemed correct because one British historian shared the same idea.³⁴ To that extent both British and Japanese writing

³³ Ibid., 805.

³⁴ W. G. Beasley, 'The Edo Experience and Japanese Nationalism', *Modern Asian Studies*, 18, 4 (1984), 563.

contain a common idea about the causation of the Meiji Restoration, unless, of course, some British historians have simply followed the guidelines laid down by Japanese historiography.

However, is it really possible to say that the Meiji Restoration occurred because of the political and diplomatic failures of the Tycoon's Government? In an essay in 1975, Conrad Totman questioned that academic analysis; more than that, he tried to evaluate the performance of the Tycoon's Government. According to him, the Tycoon's Government started to create the new Japanese society which Totman called, *a new symbiosis*. The effect of that had begun to emerge in 1867 but did not have enough time to mature.³⁵ Judging from this approach, it could be said that the reason for overthrowing the Tycoon's Government in 1868 was not because it could not keep up with the new trend but because it did not have sufficient opportunity to establish this new symbiotic society. Totman wrote:

The Tokugawa could have had their support on the new basis, not the old; time would not flow backward. And so other men forged the modern alliance of bureaucrat and aristocrat and called it Meiji Japan.³⁶

His conclusion was at least evidence that not all Western scholars accepted everything as defined by orthodox Japanese historiography.

An essentially British attitude can also be applied to defining the relationship between Ernest Satow and Saigo Takamori. Although there

³⁵ Conrad Totman, 'Fudai Daimyo and the Collapse of the Tokugawa Bakufu', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 43, 3 (1975), 591.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 591.

exist various for and against assessments, Japanese historiography generally evaluates Satow highly because he was seen as the embodiment of British diplomacy which allowed and supported nineteenth-century Japanese to promote political and economic modernization. In short, the presence of Satow in Japan in the 1860s became part of the justification for establishing the Meiji regime. Meanwhile, Saigo was given the highest evaluation within Japanese historiography because not only had he directed the Restoration but he also protected the Japanese mainland from the Western states. In fact, in present Japanese society, it is a commonly shared belief that without Saigo the Meiji Restoration could neither have been promoted nor completed. For those reasons, the existence of both Satow and Saigo were necessary to understand properly the Meiji Restoration.

Yet there are several British historians who did not follow the analysis provided by Japanese historiography. In 1968, Gordon Daniels explained that the main focus for British diplomacy towards the Japanese was just to expand commercial activities in Japan and to secure British subjects there.³⁷ Then he concluded:

But the political conclusions which the Foreign Office drew from this position were very different from those of Satow and Mitford whose memoirs have influenced so much historical writing. ³⁸

³⁷ Gordon Daniels, 'The British Role in the Meiji Restoration: A Re-interpretive Note', *Modern Asian Studies*, 2, 4 (1968), 292.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 292.

His conclusion was again evidence that not all Western historians followed the tenets of Japanese historiography. In fact, regarding Satow's diplomatic activities in 1867, Daniels claimed that it was hard to decide whether Satow really embodied the official diplomacy of the British Legation.³⁹ Daniels's analysis showed that British historiography did not trust Satow completely, even though Satow's diary and memoir are treated as valuable primary sources for the Meiji Restoration.

Such ambivalence also applies to the assessment of Saigo. In an essay of 1994, Charles L. Yates analysed Saigo's contribution to the Meiji Restoration. In one respect, he endorsed the orthodox evaluation made by Japanese historiography of Saigo. Likewise of the other two figures who along with Saigo are identified as the three major heroes of the Restoration.⁴⁰ However, in terms of the future vision of these men after promoting modernization, Yates claimed that none of them predicted accurately what would happen next.⁴¹ His analysis thus did not accept the definitions of Japanese historiography entirely; more than that, he might even have questioned why those three were praised as the major heroes of the Meiji Restoration at all. In fact, Saigo committed suicide in 1877 after instigating the rebellion against the Meiji regime which he had devoted himself so completely to found. Had Saigo held a clear future vision, perhaps, that final outcome would have been avoided. That was one element to the

³⁹ Ibid., 305.

⁴⁰ Charles L. Yates, 'Saigo Takamori in the Emergence of Meiji Japan', *Modern Asian Studies*, 28, 3 (1994), 450.

⁴¹ Ibid., 458.

background when Yates reconsidered the role of Saigo. The following was his overall conclusion:

Between 1858 and 1877, Saigo's world changed beyond recognition, in no small part because of the things Saigo did, and so perhaps the greatest tragedy of his life is simply that he rendered himself obsolete.⁴²

This contradicts the orthodox analysis of Japanese historiography, and illustrates one aspect of how British historiography has defined Saigo and the Meiji Restoration. In the above ways, British and Western historiography generally is useful for this thesis, since it can maintain a scholarly neutrality and has not been affected by the political considerations which underlie so much of Japanese writing about the events of this era.

The most important materials used to promote the arguments in this thesis will be, of course, the primary sources. When comparing British and Japanese official documents, the former are much better preserved. At the National Archives in London are preserved documents dating from 1853 to the foundation of the Meiji Government in 1868. There are also not only official despatches between the British Government and the Legation, when located both at Edo after 1858 and later at Yokohama after violent attacks in 1861 and 1862 forced a temporary relocation, but also reports from local consuls and individual Legation staff. Promoting arguments in terms of British policy is, therefore, comparatively simple. By contrast, analysing the

⁴² Ibid., 474.

Japanese stand point is more difficult because the official documents of the Tycoon's Government were not well kept. In fact, it has at times been reported that in very old Japanese houses official documents have been discovered where used to strengthen a thick papered sliding door.⁴³ After the foundation of the Meiji Government, official documents started to be preserved or edited in books, but in the case of earlier documents there was always less chance of survival. Furthermore, although there are preserved a few documents, those are hard to read for modern Japanese because the language of the nineteenth century was very different from modern Japanese in terms of grammar, style of writing, and the method of using Chinese characters.

There is one edited work which has recovered many official documents. It is *Dai Nihon Kobunsho*. Books in this series have been edited by the University of Tokyo (until 1947 the Imperial University of Tokyo) since the foundation of the Meiji Government, and they have made efforts to recover more each year. These books allow some understanding of Japanese diplomacy; unfortunately, the latest volume is 51, dealing with the year 1861. The intention was to edit all documents since Perry's arrival in 1853, but in almost 100 years since the work started only eight years have been covered. The main reason for that is that the documents are not preserved in one place but in universities, local museums and in private possession, which means that the documents have to be borrowed. Also, research is required in

⁴³ Kazuya Ito, *Roshiajin no mita Bakumatsu Nihon* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Koubunkan, 2009), 150.

foreign National Archives, not only in Britain but also in the U.S., France, the Netherlands, and Russia. Therefore, these volumes do not cover the civil war in 1868 or even the bombardment of Kagoshima in 1863 which followed the Richardson affair. These are major historical events discussed in this thesis. However, given the paucity of official Japanese documents, the Japanese perspective on developments is somewhat disadvantaged.

In terms of primary published materials, those are well preserved in both Britain and Japan. The published primary materials for the British side will be the memoirs written by Satow, Mitford, and Alexander Siebold and the book written by Rutherford Alcock (1809-97). All these men worked at the British Legation at the time of the Meiji Restoration. Satow, Mitford and Siebold wrote their memoirs looking back upon the past, of course, but they nonetheless experienced the Restoration and so their opinions are valuable.⁴⁴ Furthermore, they wrote not only of their experiences but also they analysed Japanese domestic affairs and the personalities and behaviour of the major Japanese samurais. Through their writings, something of the Japanese point

⁴⁴ Satow also kept a diary and, in general, it may be argued that his diary is more reliable than the memoir. However, in terms of Satow's memoir, there need be less anxiety, because his diary was used as the major source for his memoir. (Tadamasa Aoyama, *Meiji Ishin no Gengo to Shiryo* (Osaka: Seibundo, 2006), 179). More than that, Satow did not keep his diary regularly. His memoir, which described the whole term of the Meiji Restoration in detail, will likely be as reliable as his diary on many points. In his memoir his personal ideas and analysis also feature more.

of view is therefore apparent.⁴⁵ For example, in their memoirs, both Satow and Mitford mentioned the Japanese samurais, Saigo Takamori and Goto Shojiro (1838-97) who are both recognised as contributors to the Meiji Restoration. As already explained, modern Japanese historians honour Saigo, almost excessively, and conclude that without him the Japanese could not have achieved the Restoration. Goto's name is well known to the Japanese but he is considered a lesser influence than Saigo. However, judging from Satow and Mitford's memoirs, that Japanese appraisal should be revised because both portray Goto as an intelligent samurai who had been making an enormous effort to learn about and understand the British parliamentary system and British national administration.⁴⁶ Their memoirs effectively argue against orthodox Japanese historiography, hence their value in this thesis.

Although both Satow and Mitford wrote memoirs, Satow's memoir must be regarded as more trustworthy because Satow mastered the Japanese language whereas Mitford could not. In a private letter, Mitford wrote:

I am beginning the language but we only had three lessons yet. It was too cold in the winter to do anything but shiver. I can speak the *lingua franca* of Yokohama, but good Japanese is a very different story.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ The Cambridge University Library lists material relating to Mitford, although this comprises only one useful piece of correspondence with his father from 1867.

⁴⁶ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 267 and Redesdale, *Memories*, Vol. II, 409.

⁴⁷ Mitford to his father, 17 March 1867, Mitford papers, Cambridge University Library.

Mitford certainly met some major Japanese figures during the Restoration period, but his ability to recognise and analyse all aspects of Japanese national identity must, therefore, be in doubt.

As for Alcock's book, it is a memoir, but because it was written while he was on leave in London it cannot cover all the historical events which took place while he was Minister in Japan. However, Parkes, who succeeded him, did not write a memoir, so Alcock's work is useful as the only book written by a British Minister at that time. For example, in 1863 when his book was published, Alcock already claimed that the Mikado was the hereditary sovereign of Japan.⁴⁸ This observation may not make any impact today, but it is important for this thesis because it shows that in 1863 the British Minister had already identified the Mikado's superiority. When the British had earlier made their commercial treaty with the Tycoon, officially they had acknowledged that the Tycoon was the national sovereign of Japan. From Alcock's statement, it is possible to argue that even in 1863 the British were already anticipating that the Japanese would instigate some form of political modernization.

Also, the British Library holds the papers of Austen H. Layard from his years as under-secretary at the Foreign Office in the 1860s, but, for the Meiji Restoration era in Japan, there were few documents relevant for this thesis. Thus Layard's documents were used only where preserved in the National Archives.

⁴⁸ Rutherford Alcock, *The Capital of the Tycoon, Vol. I* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts & Green, 1863), 226.

Useful as the above primary materials are, there is always the possibility that these authors wrote their books subjectively. Thus, by relying on them, the possibility exists that the thesis itself may contain bias. To avoid that possibility, using books written by Frederick Dickins and Bernard Allen also will be necessary. The former traced the life of Parkes and the latter the career of Satow. All were of the same generation. These two works maintained a balanced analysis because their authors did not write with a view to honour Parkes and Satow. Satow expressed the opinion that, from his experience, Dickins's work was excessive in its praise of Parkes. Nevertheless, as historical sources, these two accounts are generally trustworthy.

For example, Dickins cites a letter which Parkes sent to Marcus Flowers, as consul in Nagasaki, on 14 October 1866 in which Parkes clearly claimed that the Mikado was the sovereign of Japan.⁴⁹ Historically that is important, because even before the civil war the British Minister had already made that plain. As for Allen's book, that will be valuable not only when covering Satow's point of view but also for introducing the Japanese perspective. As already noted, Allen discussed the letter written by Higashikuze to Satow thereby focusing on the Japanese dimension. There are few Westerners who focused on both sides of the argument and analysis when they wrote their books. In that way, Allen's book adds to our understanding.

⁴⁹ F. V. Dickins, *The Life of Sir Harry Parkes* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1894), 69.

Furthermore, for analysing the historical process of the Meiji Restoration, books written by Captain F. Brinkley, G. H. Gubbins and Joseph Longford will be used. The main theme in their books was just to recount the history of Japan, and for that reason they appear less important. Yet all three authors were eye-witnesses of the Meiji Restoration, and because they were in Japan their descriptions of Japanese affairs remain of interest because they wrote what they saw and their writings contain less obvious bias when compared with many secondary materials. For example, Brinkley analysed the incident when the British, French and Dutch sent their fleets to the Sea of Hyogo in 1865, and he explained the background to it.⁵⁰ As already described when introducing Shibusawa's historical publication, the Japanese asserted that it was because the Westerners were trying to interfere in Japanese domestic affairs that this incident had happened. However, as a witness of events, Brinkley completely refuted this.

Japanese eye-witnesses also left several materials. For example, Shibusawa left not only the books which discussed Tokugawa Yoshinobu but also one which recorded a series of interviews conducted with him between 1909 and 1912. This is a precious record of the Tycoon's own reflections. Nineteenth-century Japanese did not write memoirs, so Yoshinobu himself did not publish anything. However, Shibusawa's interview made it possible to reach back to the last Shogun. For example, in 1909 Yoshinobu claimed that because the British had supported Satsuma and Choshu they sent their

⁵⁰ F. Brinkley, *A History of the Japanese People* (London: The Encyclopedia Britannica Co., Ltd, 1915), 675.

fleet to the Sea of Hyogo in 1865.⁵¹ His statement was proof that nineteenth-century Japanese commonly believed that the British took the side of opponents of the Tycoon's Government and illustrates how the Japanese analysed diplomatic relations in 1860s. As Tycoon, his statement is perhaps more instructive than those of other Japanese.

In the meantime, books written by Katsu Kaishu (1823-99), Tanabe Taichi (1831-1915), Fukuchi Gen'ichiro (1841-1906) and Hayashi Tadasu (1850-1913) are all essential sources because these men not only witnessed the Restoration but were samurais of the Tycoon's Government. All of them were in important positions in the Government, adding value to their analysis and description. However, Katsu's book was different from the others in style because his pupils collected his oral opinions; his book was edited, not to read as sentences from him but to convey his opinions. Nevertheless, he was a major influence within the Tycoon's Government. For example, in April 1868, thanks to his negotiation with Saigo, the imperial army cancelled both the full-scale attack against Edo castle and the execution of Yoshinobu. In fact, at the time of this negotiation, Katsu was confirmed as having a connection with Parkes through Satow.⁵² This fact proves how he was also recognised by the British as a major figure.

Compared with Katsu, Tanabe and Fukuchi may not be so famous in Japanese history, yet their books are necessary for this thesis because they contain historical arguments focused on the period of the Meiji Restoration. Also, the two men had similar experiences. While they were samurais of the

⁵¹ Eiichi Shibusawa (ed.), *Sekimukaihikki* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1966), 12.

⁵² Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 365.

Tycoon's Government, they both learned foreign languages and they went abroad as staff of official missions. Tanabe went abroad in 1863 and 1867, while Fukuchi went abroad in 1861 and 1865. Clearly, they had an international perspective and, in fact, their books were written accordingly, maintaining a balanced approach. Shibusawa's book set out largely to justify Tokugawa Yoshinobu. Both he and Katsu, although they described the Meiji Restoration, leave the impression that they did not always tell the truth. By contrast, Tanabe and Fukuchi sought the truth in great detail. That attitude was apparent in their books because not only did they not honour the Meiji Government but they also severely criticised that of the Tycoon.

Both Tanabe and Fukuchi traced the beginning of the collapse of the Tycoon's Government to Perry's arrival in 1853. Tanabe claimed in 1898 that the reason was that the cabinet of the Tycoon's Government did not try to make decisions.⁵³ In the meantime, in 1892 Fukuchi highlighted the diplomatic awkwardness of the Tycoon's Government at the time of its negotiation with Perry and concluded that because the Government misunderstood the reason for and political background to Perry's arrival, they started to lose control.⁵⁴ Such appraisals were not found in the books by Katsu and Shibusawa. However, these explanations did not mean that Tanabe and Fukuchi hated the Tycoon's Government; they simply tried to maintain a sense of fairness and there was no personal animosity.

A further reason why the descriptions by Shibusawa and Tanabe were considered more reliable is that they had cited much information from the

⁵³ Taichi Tanabe, *Bakumatsu Gaikoudan, Vol. I* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1966), 9.

⁵⁴ Gen'ichiro Fukuchi, *Bakufu Suibouron* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1967), 43.

official documents of the British Parliament.⁵⁵ In the Japanese historiography, the official documents of the British Parliament were considered as historical records unavailable in Japanese materials.⁵⁶ Thus, it was concluded that their books maintained fairness and neutrality regarding Japanese history because they did not analyse it from only one side. Of course, there is a small objection to that idea: the official documents of the British Parliament were usually edited for the purpose of justifying British policies, and so cannot be primary materials for a systematic analysis of Anglo-Japanese diplomacy.⁵⁷ Focusing on British official documents therefore meant following the British attitude unconditionally. However, since in Japanese historiography it had already been determined that the British presence in Japan in the nineteenth century had given both a direct and indirect psychological impact for Japan's modernization,⁵⁸ so, on that point, both Shibusawa and Tanabe's works were necessary for this wider thesis.

A book written by Hayashi seems less useful for this thesis. He did not discuss so many historical incidents and its viewpoint was narrower, focusing only on certain matters and promoting argument based on specific opinions. For that reason his work is less trustworthy. Nevertheless he was an eye-witness of the Meiji Restoration and his work has contributed to the creation of existing Japanese historiography. Thus, by reviewing his

⁵⁵ Meiji Ishin Shigakkai (ed.), *Meiji Ishin to Shiryogaku* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Koubunkan, 2010), 212.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 212.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 216.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 209.

writings, not only the historical content but also an aspect of Japanese understanding about the Meiji Restoration can be analysed.

All the above materials, however, may have one big disadvantage: their authors were men of the Meiji era whose Japanese was unlike the modern language. Whenever possible their Japanese was translated into a modern form, but to maintain their main arguments and analysis most of their writings were left untouched. Thus, although their sentences can be read, the fact remains that modern Japanese cannot understand them in every detail. Compared with using the British primary materials, this is obviously a disadvantage.

There are, however, books written by Tokutomi Soho which are easy to read, because, although he was born during the time of the Tycoon's Government, he started his career only after the foundation of the Meiji regime. In fact, Tokutomi discussed many historical incidents in detail and the breadth of his analysis was greater than that of either Tanabe or Fukuchi. More trust, therefore, came to be placed in his accounts. Tokutomi was the first Japanese who pointed out the secret relationship between Satow and Saigo, and, by referring to his book, modern Japanese came to conclude that the British had supported Satsuma at the time of the Meiji Restoration. This is one explanation of why Japanese scholars have long been depending on him. More than that, by analysing his work it can be seen that he always maintained the stance of praising the Meiji Government. Of course, in that way, unlike Tanabe and Fukuchi, his books cannot be treated as unbiased. For example, concerning Tokugawa Yoshinobu,

Tokutomi claimed in 1936 that by considering all political options, he was an able Shogun.⁵⁹ However, he ended his assessment by adding the comment that he was dependent on French support.⁶⁰ Yet, he did not analyse Yoshinobu's policies deeply, and, after reading his works, the impression is given that Yoshinobu was a traitor, which was why after 1868 the Meiji authorities turned to Tokutomi's books to establish a politically suitable Japanese historiography. Despite this, Tokutomi is valuable for analysing the historical process surrounding the Meiji Restoration. Through him, we can also revisit Japanese academic notions about the Restoration. In the case of British diplomacy during the Restoration period especially, his books will be used because they are representative of material indicating common Japanese assumptions at that time.

The conversation between Satow and Saigo was a good example for showing the method of Tokutomi's analysis. He considered that foreigners might have been involved in the Meiji Restoration, and, based on his analysis, Japanese historiography accepted this as common academic understanding. In particular, the civil war of 1868-9 was highlighted by claiming that it was a proxy war between the British and French. As a result, through these successive arguments, one essential point emerged: the recognition of "foreign pressure". The Japanese have commonly come to recognise that the time of the Meiji Restoration was also the time of possible colonisation by the Westerners, and Tokutomi was the first Japanese who

⁵⁹ Tokutomi, *Meiji Ishin to Edo Bakufu*, Vol. II, 30.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 31.

claimed this. Tokutomi thereby became associated with Japanese fears about foreign pressure.

Tokutomi certainly claimed the existence of foreign pressure, but there is one thing which needs to be clarified. It is that there is a big difference between Tokutomi and the Japanese historiography over the nature of this foreign pressure. In Tokutomi's book, *Shourai no Nihon (A Future Japan)* in 1886, he wrote about foreign pressure, but what he had meant was not an invasion but requests by which Westerners expected the Japanese to change.⁶¹ In fact, he claimed that under this foreign pressure progress and civilization would be promoted.⁶² Tokutomi thus considered that when the Westerners reached Japan, the Japanese naturally recognised the more advanced nature of European civilization, and, as a result, the Meiji Restoration had started naturally. But to emphasise that, he used the words "foreign pressure".

It was only as an actual fact that Tokutomi mentioned the episode of the conversation between Satow and Saigo, yet by picking up only that point, Satow come to be considered as a British spy. However, for Tokutomi, that episode needed to be mentioned only for the purpose of showing that the Japanese had established connections with a well advanced civilization.

In fact, Tokutomi evaluated the British more highly than any other Japanese. He claimed that to survive, the Japanese would have to follow the

⁶¹ Sinh Vinh, Yukihiro Sugihara (trans.), *Tokutomi Soho (1863-1957): The Later Career* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1994), 43.

⁶² Vinh, 43.

British.⁶³ This attitude can be seen as the background against which Tokutomi introduced the episode regarding Satow and Saigo. For Tokutomi, Satow might be one element in justifying Japanese modernization, so Tokutomi might have no animosity towards Satow. Indeed, when Tokutomi visited London in February 1897, he met not only the vice president of *The Times*, but was also guided around the company.⁶⁴ That was because Satow had written a letter of introduction for Tokutomi.⁶⁵ This indicates that Tokutomi was well acquainted with Satow, hence, it is hard to consider that Tokutomi had any ill-feeling towards Satow. Tokutomi had a habit of describing the British as the global influence of the time,⁶⁶ so in the episode of Satow and Saigo there might be an element of admiration and respect for the British. Perhaps also, by mentioning that episode, Tokutomi tried to stress the wisdom of Satsuma and Choshu over other Japanese because of their connection with the British.

Immediately after the Meiji Restoration Tokutomi showed this respectful attitude towards the British, but after the Russo-Japanese war in 1904-5 he began to focus more on the Imperial family.⁶⁷ His writings thereby became more nationalistic for the purpose of promoting Japanese imperialism. As a result, the episode about Satow and Saigo might have begun to be considered by the Japanese as evidence for the possibility of colonisation. In fact, until 1945 Tokutomi contributed support for Japanese

⁶³ Noriaki Omata, *Kindai Nihon no Kokuminzo to Tennozo* (Osaka Municipal Universities Press, 2005), 292-293.

⁶⁴ Vinh, 85.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 85.

⁶⁶ Omata, 293.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 326.

imperialism. He was sufficiently impressed by the Japanese experience that he had been making an effort, by systematizing it academically, to allow it to serve as a counter to Western imperialism.

In the meantime, unlike modern Japanese historians, although Tokutomi honoured the Meiji Restoration he did not much praise the people who contributed to Japan's modernization. In fact, his concept of modernization was defined as follows:

Tokutomi Soho argued that it was not the Meiji leaders
but inexorable trends that had created the new Japan.⁶⁸

As for contributors to the Meiji Restoration, he concluded that they were neither saints nor philosophers.⁶⁹ His perception of the Meiji Restoration was different from that of others. In general terms the Meiji Restoration was defined as follows:

Pride in the Restoration rested on its character as a “nationalist revolution”, the decisive event which spared Japan the fate of other Asian peoples at the hands of Western imperialism.⁷⁰

Therefore, Japanese opinion, and especially the Meiji Government, worked at not only honouring the achievements of Japan's modernization but also idolizing the people who had contributed to it. The main purpose was to spread the propaganda about the victory of Japanese traditional

⁶⁸ Marius B. Jansen, 'The Meiji Restoration' in Marius B. Jansen (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Japan, Vol. V, The Nineteenth century* (Cambridge University Press, 1989), 361.

⁶⁹ Duss, 'Whig History, Japanese Style', 424.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 416.

nationalism. Until 1945 the Japanese were firmly influenced by such nationalism, but even in those circumstances Tokutomi did not relinquish his own point of view. In fact, he defined the background of the Meiji Restoration as being a general trend.⁷¹ And this was the point whereby his writings were trusted, because he did not honour Satsuma and Choshu blindly. In his 1893 book, *Ishin Kakumeishi no Hanmen (Another Aspect of the History of Restoration)*, he claimed to define the Meiji Restoration as caused not only by foreign pressure but also by the natural process of the collapse of feudalism. Even if the foreigners had not come to Japan, he asserted, the Tokugawa Shogunate would have collapsed.⁷² This opinion was completely different from the attitude of the Meiji Government which had been idolizing the samurais of Satsuma and Choshu. This refusal to acknowledge the achievements of Satsuma and Choshu indicates an element of academic independence whereby his writings are still worth using for this thesis.

In this thesis, analysing the diplomatic relationship between Britain and Japan will be a major aim. However, if only British and Japanese materials are used there will be a danger of losing a balanced attitude because both the British and Japanese, naturally, tried to justify their own positions and actions in their materials. To avoid that situation, other material from a third party will be necessary, and for that purpose there are books written by Dirk de Graeff van Polesbroek (1833-1916) who was a

⁷¹ Ibid., 424.

⁷² Vinh, 32-33.

Dutch Consul-general, and Jhr. Johannes Lijdius Catharinus Pompe van Meerdervoort (1829-1908), a Dutch doctor. Both of them stayed in Japan during the Restoration period, the former from 1857 to 1870 and the latter from 1857 to 1863. Thus, they were also eye-witnesses of the Restoration and independent Westerners observers. Pompe observed that the British, and Alcock in particular, were the major figures in Japan; indeed, without the British there was little else to write about.⁷³ But he described the situation of all the Westerners in Japan, which makes his publication useful. As a third party, Polesbroek described the Tycoon: the latter could leave his castle only two or three times each year and there was no freedom within it. In short, the Tycoon was a puppet manipulated by his retainers.⁷⁴ Judging from British materials, however, the Tycoon appeared more as an absolute tyrant who could do whatever he wanted. In fact, Satow severely criticised the Tycoon for this in *Eikoku Sakuron*, and that was not just his own idea but representative of all British opinion. Afterwards, by focusing only on these British ideas, the Japanese justified promoting the Meiji Restoration. Polesbroek's book suggests that this understanding might need to be changed, in which case a new approach to the Meiji Restoration is required. Pompe's book also contributes to that possibility.

However, there is one serious problem when using these Dutch books: neither of them describes all the historical incidents during the period. In the

⁷³ Jhr. Johannes Lijdius Catharinus Pompe van Meerdervoort, Jiro Numata and Susumu Arase (trans.), *Vijf Jaren in Japan* (Tokyo: Yushodo Shoten, 1968), 238.

⁷⁴ Aya Ikuma (trans.), Herman J., Moeshart (ed.), *Journaal van Jonkheer Dirk de Graeff van Polesbroek 1857-1870* (Tokyo: Yushodo Shoten, 1995), 97.

case of Polesbroek, he was in Japan for the whole time of the Restoration and he did leave a memoir. After his death, though, his uncle burned all his private papers, his memoir included. His book was partially recovered by using a memorandum and draft notes for his diaries, but it was impossible to restore it completely. As for Pompe, he described Japanese domestic affairs in detail, but only until 1863 when he left Japan, which means that not all the issues surrounding the Meiji Restoration were covered. Nevertheless, thanks to their books, a third-party position was established even if not all the historical issues were analysed.

There is one other material which can contribute from an independent perspective. Those are the books of edited newspapers in the nineteenth century. There appears no bias or arbitrary choices from the newspapers, so, by using them, each historical incident can be analysed from various points of view. For example, in *The Times* on 4 November 1863, journalists severely criticised Admiral Kuper for giving orders to set fire to the city of Kagoshima at the time of the bombardment.⁷⁵ *The Times* was clearly not under British official influence or worked simply for Britain's political advantage, or else this piece would not have appeared. The newspaper had made some effort to discover the truth.

Finally, for the purpose of arguing against the importance of *Eikoku Sakuron*, two materials will be necessary. Those are the memoirs written by the staff of the Prussian mission and by Aime Humbert. As with Pompe's book, they both recounted and analysed the historical events which they had

⁷⁵ Takeichi Minamura, *The Times ni Miru Bakumatsu Ishin* (Tokyo: Chuo Kouronsha, 1998), 54.

witnessed and omitted things which they had not experienced. These sources will not be used to debate the Meiji Restoration; rather they focused more on the previous Japanese administrative system. The fact that their books were published years before *Eikoku Sakuron* is important for the argument of this thesis.

Although strictly a secondary material, the books written by the Japanese historian, Takashi Ishii, will be referred to as a major source from which to argue about the Meiji Restoration, especially, in relation to British diplomacy. Through the current research, it has become clear that the official position taken by Japanese historiography cannot be accepted in this thesis, because the proofs offered regarding Western diplomacy are so weak. Judging from his works, Ishii himself did not endorse Japanese academic orthodoxy. In fact, he confessed honestly that in the past he had been wrongly acknowledging that Parkes and Saigo could have made a political agreement based on the ideas of *Eikoku Sakuron*.⁷⁶ His confession is important because, from it, it can be deduced that he did not support arguments based on traditional Japanese historiography. He is also the only modern Japanese historian who has indicated the similarity between *Eikoku Sakuron* and Matsuki's 1866 proposals in London.⁷⁷ No representative of accepted Japanese historiography would have made such a point. Furthermore, unlike other Japanese historians, Ishii often used Western official documents and primary sources. He promoted historical analysis and argument by stressing those materials – an attitude which indicated his

⁷⁶ Takashi Ishii, *Meiji Ishin to Gaiatsu* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Koubunkan, 1993), 104.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 199.

international and balanced perspective. His work will be used to illustrate shortcomings in Japanese historiography.

Also, in recent years, Ishii's achievements have been highly regarded in Japanese historiography because, thanks to his efforts, British, French and American diplomatic policies towards the Japanese during the Meiji Restoration period are clearly defined and also systematized more effectively than before.⁷⁸ That is because his analysis was judged to have maintained fairness. For this reason, his analysis and his method of promoting arguments were considered to be reliable.

In the next chapter, the structure of the Tokugawa Shogunate will be explained, because, without it, it will be hard to understand why many nineteenth-century Japanese recognised the need for political change after the Westerners' arrival. Chapter three will examine the Namamugi incident in 1862, its impact on Anglo-Japanese relations, and the extent to which it altered British perceptions of the Edo regime. Chapters four and five provide specific analysis of Satow's thoughts about the future of Japan as revealed in *Eikoku Sakuron*. The significance of his 1866 writings, whether they contained original ideas, and whether they thereby merit the importance which almost all Japanese scholars have attached to them is examined in chapter six. Attention turns in chapter seven to the memorandum written by the British Minister, Rutherford Alcock, in 1864 which will reinforce arguments put forward in the previous three chapters. Chapter eight

⁷⁸ Meiji Ishin Shigakkai (ed.), *Meiji Ishin to Shiryogaku*, 217.

attempts to determine what role Satow and British diplomacy played in the Meiji Restoration, and chapter nine likewise researches foreign influence in the Japanese civil war. Chapter ten, and the conclusion, return to the theme of Japanese historiography and place the findings of this thesis in that wider context. In light of this research, it is hoped to establish that much of the understanding of Japanese history in the 1860s, as discussed within the orthodox Japanese historical tradition, lacks any foundation either in reliable witness from the period or in archival evidence.

Before arguing about the essence of the Meiji Restoration, there is one issue which will have to be examined. It is: when the Meiji Restoration began and when it was completed. However, this question is not easy to answer because the answer changes according to the topic under review. In short, the definition of the Meiji Restoration will be changed by the method and standpoint of any analysis. For example, from a general point of view the Meiji Restoration has been defined as beginning when Perry came to Japan in 1853. That is the diplomatic point of view. But from an economic point of view, the Meiji Restoration can be considered to begin when the Tycoon's Government promoted economic reform in 1840s. Admittedly this reform failed, but thanks to the attempt the Japanese can be said to have introduced the basics of capitalism. In the meantime, in terms of completing the Meiji Restoration, there are several ideas in Japanese historiography. Some historians claimed it was in 1868 when the Tycoon's Government surrendered Edo Castle to the Imperial Court. Or related to this, some

insisted it was in 1869 when the ex-Tycoon's military completely surrendered at Hakodate. Other historians claimed 1871, when all the feudal regions were diminished legally, or even 1877 when the Satsuma rebellion was suppressed by the Meiji Government. From a militaristic point of view, victory in the Russo-Japanese war in 1905 has been suggested, because it was the symbolic triumph of Japanese modernization. Evidently, it is not a simple matter for many Japanese to define when the Meiji Restoration either began or was completed.

However, in this thesis, the Meiji Restoration will be defined by accepting the analysis of the Japanese historian, Shigeki Tohyama, whose book, *Meiji Ishin* (2nd version) was published in 1972. He suggested that the Meiji Restoration began in 1853 and was completed in 1877.⁷⁹ His dates are considered the best general guideline by which to analyse the Meiji Restoration in Japanese historiography, so, this thesis will also follow his analysis.

⁷⁹ Victor J. Koschmann, Yuichiro Tajiri and Naoki Umemori (trans.), *Discourse, Reform, and Insurrection in Late Tokugawa Japan 1790-1864* (Tokyo: Pelicansha, 1998), 6. However, in Tohyama's first version of *Meiji Ishin* in 1951 he defined the term Meiji Restoration as the period 1841 to 1877. (Ibid., 47).

Chapter II: Japan before the arrival of Satow

Before the 1860s, Japan was an overwhelmingly feudal society characterized by a dual system of authority with both a Tycoon and Mikado at the top of their respective hierarchies. A Tycoon dominated the feudal lords while the Mikado headed the Court nobles. These hierarchies were fundamentally incompatible, which was a major reason why domestic affairs became increasingly chaotic after the arrival of Perry, with some Japanese trying to revive the authority of the Mikado and others to strengthen the political power of the Tycoon. Some also tried to unify them. All these efforts were proceeding at same time.

Satow reflected on all this when much later he noted wryly that:

‘Looking back now in 1919, it seems perfectly ridiculous that such a notion should have been entertained, even as a joke, for a single moment, by anyone who understood the

The Japanese themselves could therefore not find a single vision for the future, but they recognized one thing: that the arrival of the Westerners meant that they had to revise their governance system. The political regime in the 1850s was called *Tokugawa Bakufu* in Japanese and usually, among the Western states, it was referred to as the Tycoon's Government. The regime's founder was Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616), sometimes described as *Gongen-sama* in the diary of Satow and in British diplomatic documents. *Gongen-sama* means god and the reason why he had been treated as a god by successive Tycoon's Governments was not only that he had crushed the previous regime but also that he had successfully created long-term stability. The previous regime was founded by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who was recognized as *Taiko-sama* by the Westerners. He had once dominated all the feudal lords and Tokugawa Ieyasu was among those who had submitted to him. However, after his death, because his son was a child, Tokugawa Ieyasu began to resist the Toyotomi regime, and, by receiving support from other feudal lords, he crushed the army of the Toyotomi regime at the battle of Sekigahara in 1600. In 1603 he was appointed Shogun by the Imperial Court.⁸¹

This title was given only to the dominant feudal lord, and, by virtue of this title, he was allowed to found his own regime to govern Japan. The title

⁸⁰ L. M. Cullen, *A History of Japan 1852-1941 Internal and External Worlds* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 188.

⁸¹ Yoshi S. Kuno., *Japanese Expansion on the Asiatic Continent* (New York: Kennikat Press, 1937), 1.

of Shogun had emerged in the Middle Ages. When the Imperial Court decided to subdue other tribes which did not concede the authority of an Imperial order, a commander in chief received that title as a lieutenant of the Mikado and was authorized to command all the warriors. That was the origin of the Shogunate. When the concept was translated into English, it became *Barbarian-quelling-Generalissimo*.⁸² In the case of Tokugawa Ieyasu, after he had founded his regime, he fought two further battles against the Toyotomi family in 1614 and 1615 in which he crushed them completely and established a system of government which lasted for about 260 years.⁸³

To stabilize his regime, Tokugawa Ieyasu established several rules of governance. He chose traditional feudalism, not centralization, which meant that he chose dominance over other feudal lords, thereby securing their territories for the stability of the Tokugawa regime. In reality, although he became Shogun, he remained essentially one feudal lord whose military and economic powers were superior to the others. He did not possess a national army or a centralized economic system. Thus, if he tried to take their lands, other feudal lords would ally and would resist him. Each feudal lord possessed military and economic power in his own region and at that time no Japanese had any idea of centralization. A Shogun could not therefore govern all of Japan by himself. In fact, there were 250 fiefs in Japan but only

⁸² A. W. Ward, G. W. Prothero, and Stanley Leathes (eds.), *The Cambridge Modern History, Vol. XI, The Growth of Nationalities* (Cambridge University Press, 1909), 825.

⁸³ Hugh Borton, *Japan's Modern Century* (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1955), 8.

one-fourth of them were under the direct governance of the Tokugawa Shogunate.⁸⁴

Tokugawa Ieyasu nevertheless faced the problem which previous regimes had to face, which was that once their political and military powers declined, other major feudal lords who had once surrendered would start to challenge the regime. However, Tokugawa Ieyasu was skilful and, to avoid that possibility, he classified all the feudal lords in three categories. Those were *Shinpan*,⁸⁵ *Fudai-Daimyo*⁸⁶ and *Tozama-Daimyo*.⁸⁷ Daimyo is the title applied to a feudal lord who governed more than 10,000 *koku* (1 *koku* equals to 5 bushels) of rice produced in his fief.⁸⁸ Under the Tokugawa Shogunate, *Koku* was the measure used to calculate the economic and military power of each feudal lord.⁸⁹

Shinpan was a feudal lord who had a blood relationship with the Tokugawa Shogunate, among whom were three major families called *Go-sanke* (three principal families.). Those three families were recognized by Tokugawa Ieyasu in case his direct bloodline disappeared. In that case, one prince from among the three would succeed to the Shogunate, which was why three direct sons of Tokugawa Ieyasu were appointed to be the masters

⁸⁴ Jon Livingston, Joe Moore and Felicia Oldfather (eds.), *The Japan Reader, Volume one, Imperial Japan 1800-1945* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973), 14.

⁸⁵ E. H. Norman, *Origins of the Modern Japanese State* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1975). 120.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 176.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁸⁸ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 36.

⁸⁹ Richard Storry, *A History of Modern Japan* (Hammondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968), 73.

of those three houses. Those three houses were located in Kii (modern Wakayama), Owari (modern Aichi) and Mito (modern Ibaragi). Twice the direct bloodline of the Tokugawa Shogunate was diminished in Japanese history. In both cases, the princes of the Tokugawa family in Kii succeeded to the Shogunate. In addition to this major role for *Go-sanke*, the *Shinpan* had a role in censoring the other feudal lords.

Fudai-Daimyo were the houses of the retainers of the Tokugawa family or were feudal lords who had already recognized the authority of Tokugawa Ieyasu before the battle of Sekigahara. Although they received that title as a reward, their fiefs were small and they were not allowed to receive more regions. However, they were given one important privilege: they were eligible to be appointed ministers in the Tycoon's Government. By this means Tokugawa Ieyasu removed any dissatisfaction. Furthermore, they were located not only around Edo and Kyoto (which were the capitals of the Tycoon and the Mikado) but also around Osaka and in other regions which were under the direct governance of the Tokugawa Shogunate. By doing this, Tokugawa Ieyasu strengthened his political power and his Government secured its own regions.

Tozama-Daimyo were the feudal lords who joined Tokugawa Ieyasu just before the battle of Sekigahara, or those who had surrendered to him after the battle. These lords were allocated regions far from the major cities and ports and were not allowed to participate in national politics. However, to discharge his obligation, Tokugawa Ieyasu allowed them to possess huge areas. In fact, among them were several feudal lords whose amounts of *koku*

were superior to the *Shinpan* and *Fudai-Daimyos*.⁹⁰ That gave them the possibility to possess strong economic and military powers; indeed, they had experience of fighting against the Tokugawa family in the past. However, Tokugawa Ieyasu introduced various regulations which would make it impossible for them to preserve those powers. In the name of the Tycoon, they were forced to maintain all the roads and banks of the rivers in Japan at their expense. Also, in city planning procedures, they were forced to produce certain amounts of money and labour as assigned by the Tycoon's Government. Although they were recognized as possessing huge amounts of *koku*, they were always facing a financial crisis.

Another reason why the Tokugawa Shogunate was so stable was that Tokugawa Ieyasu made the rule of *Sankin-Koutai*, which means alternative attendance in Japanese. He ordered all feudal lords to send their wives and children to Edo, and all lords to come and stay in Edo every other year.⁹¹ Keeping wives and children in Edo effectively meant the Tycoon's Government kept them hostage, while by the regulation of coming to Edo every other year it became impossible for feudal lords either to conspire in their regions or to make secret alliances. This was not the only purpose. When the daimyos went to Edo, they would have to be accompanied by many samurais and retainers. That meant huge expenses each time, and those would be distributed among the residents of the major roads and ports and

⁹⁰ In fact, although it was data from 1867, it has been calculated like this: the average economic power of Tozama was 87,000 koku while that of Fudai was 42,000 koku. (Peter Duss, *The Rise of Modern Japan*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1976) 30).

⁹¹ Gary P. Leupp, *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers in the Cities of Tokugawa Japan* (Princeton University Press, 1992), 10.

also in the big cities. Thus, by this rule, Tokugawa Ieyasu tried to sustain commercial activities and to expand domestic markets at the expense of his feudal lords.⁹² And by promoting the system of *Sankin Koutai*, the Tycoon's Government could create the following situation:

In the long run the sankin-kotai system helped to convert the daimyo from fractious provincial warlords into free-spending courtiers of the shogun cut off from concern for the administration of their own domains and involved in the protocols and pleasures of life at Edo.⁹³

By the system of *Sankin Koutai*, the Tycoon's Government succeeded not only to let all the feudal lords become involved in governing their own regions, but also to define Edo as the capital of Japan. And by defining Edo as capital, the Tycoon could justify his status as a national sovereign of Japan under the Tokugawa Shogunate. Otherwise, the Tokugawa family could not establish a sufficient difference between themselves and the other feudal lords, even though the chief of the Tokugawa clan was appointed Shogun by the Imperial Court.

A third reason for the success and longevity of the Tokugawa Shogunate was that Tokugawa Ieyasu had regulations for reducing and confiscating fiefs. For example, without permission, feudal lords were not allowed to repair their own castles and they were not allowed to inter-marry with the families of other feudal lords.⁹⁴ If these rules were violated, their

⁹² Norman, *Origins of the Modern Japanese State*, 125.

⁹³ Duss, *The Rise of Modern Japan*, 30.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 121.

fiefs would be reduced. In the worst cases, their houses were confiscated and they were exiled.

This governance system was called *Baku-Han* (Shogunate and Fief) and it has been described as follows:

The Baku-Han System was, above all, designed to ensure the sustained relative superiority of the Tokugawa ruler over all the feudatories, even at the expense of the aggregate power or wealth of Japan as a nation-state.⁹⁵

In the meantime, to reinforce a stable society, Tokugawa Ieyasu classified all citizens. The highest class was the warrior samurai, to which all samurais belonged. Samurais who served the Tycoon's Government were called *Banner-men*⁹⁶ and they were recognized as elite among the samurais, and given various privileges. For example, they were allowed to have the family name and also to carry swords. They were the symbols of the Tokugawa Shogunate. They were proud to be samurais and in history have come to be seen as the backbone of the nation.⁹⁷ People who were classified as non-samurai were not allowed to become samurai.⁹⁸

Fudai and Banner-men were the administrative officers of the Tycoon's Government. Feudal lords of higher status were, for example, chief and subordinate censors (written as *Oh-metsuke* and *Ko-metsuke* in Japanese). Banner-men were appointed commissioners and magistrates and served

⁹⁵ Mikio Sumiya and Koji Taira (eds.), *An Outline of Japanese Economic History, 1603-1940* (University of Tokyo Press, 1979), 172.

⁹⁶ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 36.

⁹⁷ *Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. XI, 825.

⁹⁸ Leupp, 10.

under the feudal lords. Those positions were called *Bugyo*. Able and experienced lords were appointed to be senior ministers of the Shogun (*Toshiyori*) or junior ministers (*Wakatoshiyori*). These were the core administrative posts in the Tycoon's Government.⁹⁹ Experienced feudal lords were appointed to be *Rojyu*, which was the highest government post, and, to an extent, they had responsibility for national political decisions. All of these were plural posts, and their administrative powers subdivided so as to avoid individual abuse. In the case of a national emergency, a *Tairo* (which was the highest administrative position and allowed to exercise state power) would be appointed. There were various other administrative posts in relation to civil affairs, religion, the police force and trials, all of which could only be held by samurais.

The social class next to samurais was the peasantry. They held second status because they produced the rice. Under the Tokugawa Shogunate, the market price of rice decided all other product prices.¹⁰⁰ It could be described as a rice-standard economy; in fact, the salaries for samurais were paid with rice. In terms of tax, the peasants had to pay 40%, but, in fact, they were forced to pay more than 70%,¹⁰¹ so they were always living in severe circumstances. Whatever the situation, they were forced to pay the tax which was assigned or to incur severe punishment. They were neither allowed to band together against the samurais nor to abandon their lands. Also, all children were forced to succeed their fathers. In Japanese history there were

⁹⁹ Norman, *Origins of the Modern Japanese State*, 332.

¹⁰⁰ W. G. Beasley, *The Modern History of Japan* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1963), 22.

¹⁰¹ Norman, *Origins of the Modern Japanese State*, 128.

several peasants uprising against the samurais, but each time they were harshly suppressed. That was the reality for the peasants, but since the properties of samurais were based on the peasants,¹⁰² they were given the second social status.

The third and fourth social classes were the artisans and merchants. Although the merchants had the lowest social status, they possessed economic power-especially after permanent peace was established when they created a money circulation economy throughout Japan. The merchants used widely accepted gold and silver coins in their daily lives, which were more stable than rice. In fact, the feudal lords and samurais started to borrow from the merchants.¹⁰³ Thus as time passed, the more the feudal lords needed to be supported by the major merchants. By that process, some merchants gained huge economic advantage. However, they were not allowed to change their status. Under the Tokugawa Shogunate, there was no concept of liberty or social equality.¹⁰⁴

These strict social structures, however, did not mean that all Japanese except the samurais were confined to the margins of society. Under the Tokugawa Shogunate a high rate of literacy was recorded¹⁰⁵ and citizens broadly lived in satisfactory conditions under that social classification.¹⁰⁶ In

¹⁰² Borton, 18.

¹⁰³ William Lockwood, *The Economic Development of Japan Growth and Structural Change* (Princeton University Press, 1968), 6.

¹⁰⁴ Sumiya and Taira (eds.), *An Outline of Japanese Economic History 1603-1940*, 171.

¹⁰⁵ William Lockwood, *The State and Economic Enterprise in Japan* (Princeton University Press, 1965), 34.

¹⁰⁶ Borton, 62.

fact, after about 260 years of such governance, Japanese society was favourably evaluated by some Westerners as follows:

1. The Polity was headed by a divine king.
2. The religious institutions (Shinto and Confucian) were not differentiated from the polity—Buddhist temples were separate but were subordinate to political authority.
3. Society was viewed as a part of the natural order.
4. The World view was monistic, there was no religious “Other”.¹⁰⁷

It was a picture largely of domestic stability which made it possible for the Tycoon to govern in peace.

Tokugawa Ieyasu also applied severe restrictions to the Imperial Court. After the late Middle Ages, when the Mikado and Court nobles gave up their political power and authority over the warriors,¹⁰⁸ they had been ignored in secular matters, and only in rituals could they demonstrate their existence. Not only were they kept isolated in Kyoto, but Tokugawa Ieyasu also restricted their activities by laws. They came under the censorship of the civil administration of Kyoto, which had duties of censorship against both the feudal lords of western Japan and the Imperial Court.

¹⁰⁷ Albert M. Craig and Donald H. Shively (eds.), *Personality in Japanese History* (University of California Press, 1970), 288.

¹⁰⁸ Janet Hunter, *The Emergence of Modern Japan - An Introductory History since 1853* (London: Longman, 1989), 2.

Tokugawa Ieyasu also used the Imperial Court for the justification of the Tokugawa family. He ensured that when a new Tycoon succeeded, the Mikado must acknowledge that fact. In the seventeenth century, still, there was no political role for the Imperial Court, so it was powerless to resist the Tokugawa family. Ieyasu recognised that, but even so did not risk the Imperial Court being seen to identify with any opponent. That was why the Mikado was involved in the ceremony for the succession of the new Tycoon. In fact, Ieyasu determined this when he became Tycoon in 1603 and was acknowledged by the Emperor Go-Youzei (r. 1586-1611).¹⁰⁹ There were two reasons for this. One, as indicated earlier, was to define the Tokugawa family as different from the other feudal nobility, but the second was to clearly place the status of the Imperial Court as being beneath the Tokugawa Shogunate. It was not the Imperial Court which voluntarily appointed Ieyasu as Tycoon but Ieyasu who requested the Imperial Court to do it.¹¹⁰ This acknowledged publicly that the Imperial Court could not resist the Tokugawa family.

This historical fact provided one justification for promoting the Meiji Restoration¹¹¹ because, before Ieyasu, the title of Shogun was called *Kubo*. However, originally, *Kubo* was the title for the Mikado, meaning the person who would succeed to the status of Emperor.¹¹² Thus, when Ieyasu became

¹⁰⁹ Hermann Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology—Early Constructs, 1570-1680* (Princeton University Press, 1985), 163.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 163.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 163.

¹¹² Luke S. Roberts, *Performing the Great Peace—Political Space and Open Secrets in Tokugawa Japan* (University of Hawaii Press, 2012), 23.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 23.

Shogun, previously called *Kubo*, he could in practical terms become the national sovereign of Japan.¹¹³ Ideologically too, Ieyasu could thereby be the true national sovereign of Japan instead of the Mikado by virtue of succeeding to that title. Yet although Ieyasu invented the procedure whereby the new Shogun would have to be appointed by the Mikado, still it was considered by some Japanese that the Tokugawa family had taken over a title which should have belonged to the Imperial Court. This became one element in establishing the new ideology for promoting political modernization.

Nevertheless, in the early seventeenth century Ieyasu had to enforce that method, otherwise his efforts to achieve victory over all the other feudal lords would be meaningless. That was why the Tycoon's Government was defined as follows:

The bakufu, through a number of devices, came over time to pose as a national government, and in the process came to outshine the court, drawing all attention to itself as the sole center of political authority.¹¹⁴

As a result, the Mikado and the Imperial Court had to fallen into obscurity in Kyoto for about 260 years in the name of *neutralization* or *De-symbolization*.¹¹⁵

Although the Court nobles had lost all their regions after the late Middle Ages, Tokugawa Ieyasu nevertheless regulated them because he was

¹¹³ Ibid., 23.

¹¹⁴ Ooms, 165.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 170.

afraid that other feudal lords might try to access the Imperial Court. He permitted the Imperial Court to conduct traditional rituals by themselves, but he ordered them to report regularly to the civil administration of Kyoto. In return, he donated a certain amount of money every year. Furthermore, Tokugawa Ieyasu promoted the ceremony whereby when a new Tycoon succeeded, he would receive acknowledgement from the Mikado. Tokugawa Ieyasu thereby tried to show that the Tycoon's Government derived its legitimacy from the Imperial Court. However, since the Tycoon's Government dominated all secular aspects of Japan, its attitude towards the Imperial Court was nothing but a deception aimed to avoid criticism. Except for the Tycoon's Government, nobody was allowed access to the Mikado and Imperial Court.¹¹⁶

The reason why Tokugawa Ieyasu was so nervous about isolating the Imperial Court related to Japanese spirituality. The Mikado was the symbol of Japanese identity, and defined as follows:

The Emperor is the true and only legitimate sovereign, the
lineal descendant of the Gods of Heaven by whom Japan was

¹¹⁶ However, there is a good appreciation by some historians of the code of 1615, called *Buke Shotatto* in Japanese. Its main rationale was that under this code the Imperial Court could secure legitimacy. (Lee Butler, *Emperor and Aristocracy in Japan 1467-1680—Resilience and Renewal* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2002), 223). The main intention of Ieyasu when establishing that code was to define the Imperial Court as a more balanced, traditionally functioning Court (Butler, 203). Thus, although it was the case that by establishing the code the Tycoon's Government restricted the Imperial Court, at the same time, thanks to that code, the Imperial Court could gain a *raison d'être*.

created, the first and best of all the lands on earth; that to him alone the unquestioning allegiance of every loyal Japanese is due.¹¹⁷

In the Shinto faith, the Mikado was a descendant of the Sun-goddess *Amaterasu*,¹¹⁸ hence the Japanese commonly believed that the imperial bloodline was sacred. Indeed since the Emperor Jinmu, who was said to have existed in 660 BC, the imperial bloodline had been (and remains) uninterrupted. The Mikado was a god and the Imperial Court a sacred place. Living where the common people were forbidden to enter, the Mikado performed many rituals to pray for peace and the fertility of Japanese soil. Since the Japanese possessed the universal idea of unconditional obedience to and worship of the Mikado, any person who failed to admit imperial authority was regarded as an enemy of the state. Tokugawa Ieyasu thus considered the potential psychological impact of the Mikado upon the Japanese to be most dangerous. If the Mikado instigated feudal lords to rise up against the Tycoon's Government, none would refuse. Indeed, they would justify themselves by indicating imperial authority. Hence it was vital that the Tycoon's Government acknowledged the position of the Imperial Court in a way which would not cause complaint within Japan.

In this thesis, there are arguments about analysing the *raison d'être* for the Mikado from various points of view, but before that there is one thing which has to be stressed. It is the difference between the Mikado and

¹¹⁷ Joseph H. Longford, *The Evolution of New Japan* (Cambridge University press, 1913), 17.

¹¹⁸ Jean Herbert, *Shinto-At the Fountain-Head of Japan* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1967), 389.

emperors elsewhere in the world. It is hard to find any similarity by simple comparison or argument, largely because the Mikado is well defined as follows:

The word *emperor* is more problematic. As scholars have noted, Japanese “emperors” rarely ruled as such. They lacked individual power, a standing army, and, most significantly, an empire.¹¹⁹

In particular, after the Middle Ages the Mikado became the symbol of Japanese national identity, and that attitude meant the Mikado would never be involved in secular matters. There was even a suggestion that the Japanese should use the word *Tenno* not Mikado.¹²⁰ The reason was that, although there are difficulties using the word *Tenno*, still when compared with Mikado, *Tenno* seemed more appropriate.¹²¹ However, in this thesis the word Mikado will be used rather than *Tenno*, because in the nineteenth century, not only the Japanese but also the foreigners used that word. If the word, *Tenno* is used, the arguments will become confused.

In the meantime, Tokugawa Ieyasu encouraged the Japanese to learn Confucianism. This was partly to encourage the idea of loyalty to the state and their masters, but also by promoting Confucianism, to diminish Shinto ideas among the ordinary people.¹²² He did not destroy the Shinto shrines and rituals but he and his successors founded many Confucian schools. Shinto customs were deeply related to daily life,¹²³ and thoroughly

¹¹⁹ Butler, 13.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 13.

¹²¹ Ibid., 13.

¹²² Craig and Shively (eds.), *Personality in Japanese History*, 287.

¹²³ Roger Eastman, (eds.), *The Ways of Religion-An Introduction to the Major Tradition*

recognized by the Japanese. Thus, by stressing Confucianism ideals, Tokugawa Ieyasu emphasized the importance of loyalty to political masters and not for the Mikado. By doing this, Tokugawa Ieyasu eventually achieved the dominance of Confucianism over Shinto, and the more time passed, the more the Mikado and his Imperial Court were marginalised. As Rutherford Alcock described, a Mikado was born and spent his whole life at the Court in Miyako, and in the end he died there.¹²⁴ Not surprisingly, for the Westerners, the existence of the Mikado meant nothing, which was why they misused the title of *emperor* for the Tycoon.¹²⁵ That all stemmed from the policy of Tokugawa Ieyasu.

Tokugawa Ieyasu was also a skilful diplomat. By tradition, the Japanese had a diplomatic relationship only with China. By acknowledging the emperor of China as a leader in Asia, the Japanese were allowed to trade with the Chinese. However, in the fifteenth century, the Jesuit missionary Francisco Xavier arrived in the southern part of Japan and started to promote Christianity. Since then, along with Christian missionaries, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and English traders came to Japan and some feudal lords started to trade with them. The feudal lords expected to purchase guns and powder, so to encourage active trade they allowed the missionaries to spread Christianity. In fact, Tokugawa Ieyasu achieved his military victories by using gunpowder, so, at first, he preserved the

(Oxford University Press, 1993), 243.

¹²⁴ Alcock, *The Capital of the Tycoon*, Vol. II, 227.

¹²⁵ *Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. XI, 826.

diplomatic policy of the previous regime and allowed trade with Western states.¹²⁶

After the foundation of his regime, though, Tokugawa Ieyasu started to reconsider. He became afraid that other feudal lords, especially, those who had once been enemies of the Tokugawa family, might promote secret trades. If that happened, they too could gain advanced weapons and technology. Thus, he decided to get rid of this danger to his regime. First, in 1616, he limited international trade to the ports of Hirado and Nagasaki.¹²⁷ Then, in 1624, he forbade the Spanish to come to Japan, and in 1638 he applied that regulation against the Portuguese.¹²⁸ In 1623 the English withdrew from Hirado because they lost to the Dutch in the competition for international trade in East Asia.¹²⁹ The English, however, had received the right to trade and to live in Edo with extraterritoriality.¹³⁰ These privileges were thanks to the effort of one Englishman, William Adams, who was an advisor to Tokugawa Ieyasu. No other Western state received such advantages. By the above process, the Netherlands in time became the only European state which maintained commercial relations with Japan. However, that did not mean that all the feudal lords could trade with the Dutch freely. The Tycoon's Government ruled that only the Tokugawa regime could trade at Nagasaki, thereby dominating the wealth produced by international trade.

¹²⁶ Takeshi Toyoda, *A History of Pre-Meiji Commerce in Japan* (Tokyo: Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, 1969), 78

¹²⁷ Fox, 20.

¹²⁸ Norman, *Origins of the Modern Japanese State*, 120.

¹²⁹ Fox, 20.

¹³⁰ Morinosuke Kashima, *Nihon Gaikoushi* (Tokyo: Kashima Research Press, 1965), 7.

Furthermore, although the Dutch were allowed to be in Japan, they were forced to stay on an artificial island in the harbour at Nagasaki, called *Dejima*, which only authorized people could visit. The Dutch were not allowed to travel around Japan freely. Also, after 1715, the Tycoon's Government started to limit the number of Chinese ships which could enter Nagasaki. This was to prevent the huge amounts of gold and silver coins which flew overseas.¹³¹ That same limitation on trade applied to the Japanese. Until that time, many Japanese had sailed to China, the Philippines and Southeast Asia, but now this was prohibited. The Tycoon's Government had become afraid that the Japanese might experience the benefits of other civilizations,¹³² and any person who violated this regulation was sentenced to death.¹³³ By these procedures, the Tycoon's Government completed its isolation policy.¹³⁴ However, it had already proved one thing: the Japanese had closed the state, but that did not mean that this situation had happened only in Japan, because at that time China, Korea and Vietnam had also closed their states.¹³⁵ The main reason was a reaction to Western economic contacts since the feudal states of East Asia needed to control their own territories strictly.¹³⁶ That was judged the only means by which these Asian states could maintain their national hierarchies,

¹³¹ Ibid., 21.

¹³² Kuno, 2.

¹³³ Fox, 20.

¹³⁴ W. G. Beasley, *Great Britain and the Opening of Japan 1834-1858* (London: Luzac & Company, Ltd, 1951), xvii.

¹³⁵ Masato Miyaji, *Bakumatsu Ishinki no Shakaiteki Seijishi Kenkyu* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1999), 87.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 87.

otherwise, their regimes might collapse under pressures caused by free trade. The Japanese experience was not unique.

In the meantime, Tokugawa Ieyasu forbade the existence of Christianity in Japan. Under the regime of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Christian missionaries had already been persecuted, but Tokugawa Ieyasu introduced regulations to persecute the Christians systematically. In 1614 all Christian missionaries were exiled and two years later the Tycoon's Government ordered all the feudal lords to persecute the Christians in their regions.¹³⁷ Those who refused to abandon their religion or who kept worshipping in secret were either to be executed or exiled overseas. By this time, many Christian churches had been constructed, especially in the Kyushu area, and many Japanese had been baptized. Since their numbers were increasing rapidly, Tokugawa Ieyasu decided to act swiftly and severely. He wished to exterminate them in Japan because they refused to submit to the authority of the Tycoon's Government and their feudal lords. As a result of his actions, all the missionaries and Christians had either been executed or were exiled by 1639.¹³⁸

Japan's subsequent isolation was intended both to protect Japan and to secure its economic system. If the regime allowed free trade, then rice, which was the core element in the Japanese economy, would be exported and, if so, the Japanese economic system might easily collapse. This would mean not only the collapse of the Tokugawa regime but also that Japanese soil could be captured by foreigners. Tokugawa Ieyasu, by promoting isolationist

¹³⁷ Fox, 20.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 20.

policies, arguably did create a more secure nation and a more stable polity and society than under previous regimes.

Ieyasu (1542-1616) set up the last in a series of Shogunates, or hereditary military dictatorships, whereby the greatest feudal family exercised political power while relegating the Emperor and court with suitable euphemisms of veneration and obedience to the obscurity of a cloistered life in Kyoto.¹³⁹

The problem, however, was that for 200 years the Japanese had no opportunity to notice the advance of Western civilization. When they finally opened their ports and came face to face with Western technology, the psychological impact would be enormous.

Yet even before 1853, diplomatic contacts with Westerners had occurred. In 1771, via the Dutch at Nagasaki, the Tycoon's Government was told that the Russians had founded a Japanese language school in Irkutsk.¹⁴⁰ After that, the Russians showed themselves on the Japanese coast and requested a commercial relationship. A. Laxman in 1792, N. P. Rezanoff in 1804 and Captain V. M. Golovnin in 1811 headed the major Russian missions which visited Japan.¹⁴¹ In 1818 Britain sent a mission aimed to

¹³⁹ E. H. Norman, *Japan's Emergence as a Modern State-Political and Economical Problems of the Meiji Period* (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1940), 11.

¹⁴⁰ Delmer M. Brown, *Nationalism in Japan-an introductory historical analysis* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1955), 62.

¹⁴¹ Norman, *Origins of the Modern Japanese State*, 142.

open Japanese ports.¹⁴² In addition to these official missions there were unofficial activities and foreign appearances in Japanese seas.

Despite Japan's isolation, several Japanese were interested in going overseas. For example, the scholar Honda Toshiaki urged that Japan should become the England of the East,¹⁴³ for which purpose he identified four essentials: gunpowder, metals, shipping and overseas possessions.¹⁴⁴ The astronomer Hayashi Shihei stressed the problem of defending Japanese soil, so insisted on the complete dominance of Ezo (modern Hokkaido) against the Russian advance.¹⁴⁵ However, the Tycoon's Government rejected their opinions and maintained its isolation policy. Furthermore, the Government ordered feudal lords to fire against Western ships without any warning in 1825.¹⁴⁶ Officials remained unaware how Western states had developed in political, economic, military and industrial terms. Hence when the king of the Netherlands explained the political situation in Western Europe and requested a loosening of the isolation policy, the Tycoon's Government rejected it without consideration.¹⁴⁷ This hostile response was only abandoned when it was reported that British military forces had crushed the Chinese in the Opium War of 1840-1842. The Japanese had traditionally considered China to be the centre of the world, and that by respecting

¹⁴² Mikiso Hane, *Modern Japan-A Historical Survey*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986) 65-66.

¹⁴³ E. W. F. Tomlin, *Japan* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973), 66.

¹⁴⁴ Ryusaku Tsunoda, Wm. De Bary, Theodore and Donald Keene (eds.), *Sources of the Japanese Tradition* (Columbia University Press, 1958), 555.

¹⁴⁵ Brown, 63.

¹⁴⁶ Hane, 66.

¹⁴⁷ David Murray, *The Story of the Nations, Vol. 37 Japan* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1894), 314.

Chinese emperors, peace and order in Asia would be maintained. However, in a short period, the British destroyed that belief through advanced military technology, following which the Tycoon's Government concluded that a British advance towards Japan would be only a matter of time.¹⁴⁸

Perry arrived with an official letter from U.S. President Fillmore in July 1853 against this altering perception of international affairs.¹⁴⁹ He requested ports to be opened and a supply of water, wood and food for American ships. His request was not to open the ports for commerce, but only to secure the lives of American sailors in the Pacific.¹⁵⁰ However, his request had an enormous psychological impact on the Tycoon's Government since he commanded four battleships. Before his arrival, several Westerners had appeared on Japanese coasts, but they did not show any military power. This time, Perry requested negotiations by showing advanced military technology. Since the officers of the Tycoon's Government already knew of the superiority of Western technology, they promised negotiations to be concluded next year. Perry agreed and left Japanese waters. That was not a solution but it did allow time for a decision.

When confronting this arrival of Westerners and their military force, the Tycoon's Government abandoned one tradition: it now translated the documents from Fillmore and Perry into Japanese and distributed them to all the feudal lords, asking them to express their ideas. That was unimaginable from a regime which had hitherto been promoting absolutism

¹⁴⁸ Beasley, *Great Britain and the Opening of Japan 1834-1858*, 40.

¹⁴⁹ Murray, 313.

¹⁵⁰ Borton, 13.

and which never asked for opinions regarding political decisions. This fact alone showed Perry's psychological impact. 61 feudal lords replied: 19 urged "willingness to accept the trade and the opening ports" while another 19 insisted on "outright rejection of Perry's request". 14 more "reflected a primary concern with the need to avoid war" and seven suggested "rejection to be the ultimate aim but envisaged the adoption of temporary expedients meanwhile". Only two replied: "Bowed to Bakufu Orders".¹⁵¹ Although not all the lords replied, nor would their replies be adopted as a national decision, this example did show how Japanese opinion had become fragmented. Furthermore, the fact that the Tycoon's Government had requested opinions indicated how its confidence had been shaken.¹⁵²

When Perry returned on 31 March 1854, the Government made a treaty with him, the main content of which was to open the ports of Shimoda and Hakodate and to supply food, water and wood for American ships.¹⁵³ The Tycoon's Government thereby gave up its isolation policy but there were several feudal lords and many samurais who opposed this treaty. However, this was not a commercial but a friendship treaty, so at the time there was no anti-regime movement. In 1854 the Government made the same treaty with Sir James Sterling of Britain, the content being similar to one which an earlier envoy, John Bowring, had suggested in 1845. This time, the British

¹⁵¹ W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration* (Oxford University Press, 1973), 90.

¹⁵² Hajime Ishikawa, *Jiken de Tsuduru Bakumatsu Meiji Ishinshi, Vol. I* (Aichi: Asahi News Company, Nagoya Branch, 1998), 17.

¹⁵³ Ernest Satow, *Kinse Shiriaku: A History of Japan From the first visit of Commodore Perry in 1853 to the Capture of Hakodate by the Mikado's forces in 1869* (Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1973), 4.

recognized the effectiveness of showing military force.¹⁵⁴ Shortly after, the same treaties were made with France, Russia and the Netherlands and the Japanese were thus forced to enter into international politics and commerce. In *The Times* there were only three articles featuring Japan in 1846 and 1847, and then, during the next four years, none at all. By 1852 there were 11 articles about Japan,¹⁵⁵ indicating how Europeans had started to focus on Japan in both political and commercial terms in the Far East.

From this time, the Japanese also started to emphasize new ideas: *Sonno* and *Jyoi*. These would become key elements for discussion relating to the Meiji Restoration. These ideas were formulated academically by scholars of the Mito-Tokugawa family. They took several generations to form and developed by fusing the ideals of Shinto, traditional Japanese thought, and Confucianism. The core idea was to worship the Mikado for the purpose of increasing nationalism, whereby all Japanese should be unified under imperial authority. With time, however, this changed its meaning to crushing the Tokugawa Shogunate. Then, when Westerners forced Japan to make treaties, a further dimension was added: hostility against foreigners to defend Japanese soil. Hence *Sonno* (worship the Emperor) and *Jyoi* (expel the barbarian) developed and became popular slogans after the opening of Japan. The efforts of the scholars of the Mito-Tokugawa family were later evaluated as follows;

¹⁵⁴ Beasley, *Great Britain and the Opening of Japan 1834-1858*, 102.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 89.

The Mito historians or the leaders of the theologico-philosophical movement known as the “Revival of Pure Shinto”. Their work tended to break down the barriers of seclusion which had been one of the main defences of the Shogunate against radical changes in thought and life in Japan.¹⁵⁶

These ideas spread quickly. Motoori Norinaga, a famous scholar of Japanese thought, had already taught:

The Japanese emperor was descended directly from the Sun-goddess; that his claim to temporal power rested on divine descent; that the Japanese islands and people were also of divine origin; and that Japan was by these facts made superior to other lands.¹⁵⁷

His thinking paved the way for *Sonno-Jyoi* and foreigners became targets of hostility for the purpose of raising Japanese nationalism under the Mikado. The revival of ancient tradition and the arrival of the foreigners in the same period thereby combined as a major step by which political power and authority would shift from the Tycoon to the Mikado.¹⁵⁸

Another dimension to the rapid spread of *Sonno-Jyoi* was that some feudal lords and samurais severely criticized the diplomatic policies of the Tycoon’s Government. Recognizing the superiority of Western military technology and wishing to avoid war, it had made various efforts to maintain good foreign relations. However, other Japanese criticized the Government

¹⁵⁶ Walter Wallace McLean, *A Political History of Japan-During the Meiji Era 1867-1912* (New York: Russell & Russell Inc., 1965), 33.

¹⁵⁷ Beasley, *The Modern History of Japan*, 51.

¹⁵⁸ Craig and Shively (eds.), *Personality in Japanese History*, 288.

as a yes-man of the foreigners and began an anti-regime movement. *Sonno-Jyoi* justified such actions, especially for those samurais who swore loyalty to the Mikado, called *Shishi*.¹⁵⁹ Samurais traditionally belonged to feudal lords, but *Shishi* were samurai who chose to work for the Mikado instead and they became master-less samurais. Their actions became a major element of social uneasiness for both Japanese and foreigners, because they were the main promoters of violence in the name of punishment by Heaven.

Judging from this, it could be claimed that *Sonno-Jyoi* and the Mitogaku were out of date and that they simply encouraged terrorism. Indeed, *Jyoi* may have appeared an act of terror for the foreigners, although in truth it was not. The following was the essence of *Jyoi*:

The *Jo-i* thought of Mito was based on a fear that the moral fibre of the people was weakening. Relations with foreign nations must be prevented, or postponed, while the national spirit was aroused and national strength built up; they would then be established on Japan's own terms, advantageous to its own interest.¹⁶⁰

Since the foundation of diplomatic and commercial relationships with the foreigners, the Japanese had recognised the necessity of protecting the organs of the state,¹⁶¹ and that attitude became an important background to

¹⁵⁹ Ishikawa, 97.

¹⁶⁰ David Magarey Earl, *Emperor and Nation in Japan—Political Thinkers of the Tokugawa Period* (University of Washington press, 1964), 90.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 90.

the quick and wide spread of *Sonno-Jyoi* and Mitogaku among the Japanese. Attacking the foreigners nevertheless was not the essence of the movement.

However, Mitogaku contributed indirectly to solving one difficult situation. That was the Restoration of Imperial rule by Tokugawa Yoshinobu when on 9 November 1867 he returned his political authority to the Imperial Court. It can, of course, be argued that because the feudal lords no longer obeyed the Tycoon, he had to give up his political status. That may be true, but equally it can be suggested that, because Yoshinobu was from the Mito-Tokugawa family, he could make such a decision having already accepted the essence of Mitogaku thinking. Yoshinobu never made this clear, but his action was consistent with such thinking. According to the Mitogaku, the political status of the Tycoon was conferred by the Mikado, so, if the Mikado did not allow the status then the Tycoon would lose his justification.¹⁶² From that point alone it is hard to conclude that the Mitogaku school was simply the ideology of terrorism.

At first, even though Japanese had created *Sonno*, radical Japanese did not focus initially on the issue of imperial authority. Rather, they used the slogan to criticize the Government; by emphasizing the Mikado, they could distance themselves from loyalty to the Tycoon. Originally, *Jyoi* was advocated to defend Japanese soil under the command of the Tycoon's Government in case of war. In reality, radical Japanese promoted terrorism against Westerners in the name of *Jyoi*. Thus, *Sonno-Jyoi* spread among the Japanese differently from the intention of the Mito-Tokugawa scholars. The

¹⁶² Ibid., 204.

Dutch representative, De Wit, described the former Prince of Mito, Tokugawa Nariaki, as the enemy of Westerners,¹⁶³ and illustrated how radical Japanese justified their violence by using the slogan. Although intended to protect Japan's national identity,¹⁶⁴ the promotion of *Sonno-Jyoi* became transformed into a step on the road to modernization. In 1856 British and French military forces confronted the Chinese again and, as a result, the Chinese were soon forced to open markets. Fearful that this was the first step towards an attack on Japan, the Tycoon's Government decided to make commercial treaties with the West to avoid China's fate. It had already started to negotiate with Townsend Harris (1804-78), the first American Consul General and Minister to Japan in 1856. Because British and French forces had been fighting the Russians in the Crimea, and were also fighting China in the Arrow War,¹⁶⁵ those two powers could not press for negotiations at that time with the Tycoon's Government.

Right after the 1854 treaty with Perry, the Tycoon's Government started to promote English, French and German, and also, the study of military technology, science and metallurgy.¹⁶⁶ It was eager to learn. However, the feudal lords and samurais were not so concerned. They had been opposing the policies of the Tycoon's Government, based on *Sonno-Jyoi*,

¹⁶³ *Dai Nihon Kobunsho*, Vol. 42 (1989), 113-114. In the meantime, one idea suggests Tokugawa Nariaki to be an energetic administrator because he contributed to the spread of *Shinron* widely among the Japanese. (Earl, 97).

¹⁶⁴ Takao Tsunoda and Michitaro Shidehara (trans.), Neil Skene Smith (revised), Kurt Singer (ed.), *An Economic History of Japan* (Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1977), 245.

¹⁶⁵ Beasley, *The Modern History of Japan*, 61.

¹⁶⁶ Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, 121.

and criticized the Government as acting contrary to Japanese tradition. For them, making commercial relations with foreigners meant a serious betrayal of Japan's sacred identity. Because of their long isolation, the Japanese had little understanding of international politics and trade, so, whatever the situation, they opposed the Tycoon's policies. Opposition became larger and more nationwide day by day, and, as the authority of the Tycoon's Government declined, it could no longer keep control. Thus, the Government decided to take advantage of the Imperial Court by requesting imperial approval which could be used not only to subdue the feudal lords but also to justify making the commercial treaties.¹⁶⁷ Because of their dominance over the Imperial Court since the era of Tokugawa Ieyasu, ministers considered that they would receive this easily. Rutherford Alcock even described the Mikado as possessing no power in such matters.¹⁶⁸

However, the 121st Emperor Komei (1831-67) had already analysed the background to this decision by the Tycoon's Government and he recognized the declining power of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Thus, to recover the status of the Imperial Court and also to defend Japanese soil, he declined the request.¹⁶⁹ Emperor Komei was said to have stated that had he approved, he would set a shameful example for the future and that the Japanese people would not trust the Imperial Court anymore.¹⁷⁰ By this imperial action, Japanese adherents to *Sonno-Jyoi* received justification for their actions and became even more aggressive in criticism of the Tycoon's Government. By

¹⁶⁷ Beasley, *Great Britain and the Opening of Japan 1834-1858*, 182.

¹⁶⁸ *Dai Nihon Kobunsho*, Vol. 45 (1995), 389.

¹⁶⁹ Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, 137.

¹⁷⁰ Ishikawa, 86.

this incident, the Mikado and the Imperial Court, long abandoned, re-entered Japanese politics.

The opposition of Emperor Komei shocked the Tycoon's Government, because it could not now promote the policies which it had planned and because the idea of *Sonno-Jyoi* was approved indirectly by the Mikado. The Government became deadlocked, and, to resolve this political struggle, Ii Naosuke, a prince from the major *Fudai* Daimyo, was appointed *Tairo*. He had already negotiated with Townsend Harris and in 1858 had signed a commercial treaty without any imperial grant.¹⁷¹ Ii considered that having commercial relationships with foreign countries was unavoidable; in international politics and to avoid war, commercial treaties were the only solution.¹⁷² He was reported as insisting that commercial relationships would also be to the advantage of Japan.¹⁷³ By this 1858 treaty, the Japanese agreed to open the ports of Hyogo, Niigata, Yokohama, Nagasaki and Hakodate and also to open the cities of Edo and Osaka. In the meantime, the Japanese allowed the Americans free trade, extraterritoriality and a most favoured nation clause.¹⁷⁴

Shortly after, the Tycoon's Government made the same commercial treaties with France, the Netherlands and Russia. The British treaty with Lord Elgin followed on 26 August 1858.¹⁷⁵ This was proof that the Tycoon's

¹⁷¹ Satow, *Kinse Shiriaku*, 11.

¹⁷² Fox, 35.

¹⁷³ Ishikawa, 11.

¹⁷⁴ Kashima, 35.

¹⁷⁵ David Steeds and Ian Nish, *China, Japan and 19th century Britain* (Irish University Press, 1977), 47.

Government tried to avoid wars against Western states.¹⁷⁶ In the meantime, huge criticism was directed against Ii Naosuke, who had made these treaties without an imperial grant, hence an anti-Tokugawa Shogunate movement emerged beyond anything seen at the time of Perry's treaty. Ii was a realist, but mid-nineteenth-century Japan had no international perspective. Indeed, Japan has been described as follows:

In the middle of the nineteenth century Japan was as weak as contemporary Burma or Siam, facing the most powerful nations of the West without allies, without a fleet or a modern army, with no monies in its treasury, its industry still handicraft, its trade negligible, its poverty profound, its ruler the *Shogun*-as distinct from the sovereign-a figure no longer commanding respect or obedience.¹⁷⁷

Japan was thus visibly weak and Ii probably knew it. Thus, when told by Harris that if the Tycoon's Government refused his treaty, the Japanese would suffer the same fate as the Chinese, Ii felt he had no choice but to sign.¹⁷⁸ His decision was correct in the circumstances, but his reaction to the opposition made the situation worse.

The most humiliated person was Emperor Komei who, of course, had officially rejected the Tycoon's request. As an expression of his anger, after the Government announced the treaty with Harris, the Emperor officially opposed it by the following statement:

¹⁷⁶ *Journal van Jonkheer Dirk de Graeff van Polesbroek 1857-1870*, 105.

¹⁷⁷ Norman, *Japan's Emergence as a Modern State*, 46.

¹⁷⁸ Borton, 43.

A blemish on our Empire and a stain on our divine land.¹⁷⁹

Alexander von Siebold, a colleague of Satow at the British Legation, pointed out the two big mistakes of the Tycoon's Government. First, the Government passed the responsibility to the Mikado, forcing him to make the decision, but then ignored the Mikado's opinion. The second mistake was that by appearing to yield to foreign pressure, the Tycoon's Government revealed its inability to govern either domestically or internationally.¹⁸⁰

Whatever the intention, the commercial treaties made by Ii now became the major element of confusion in Japan's domestic politics. The commercial activity which followed produced economic chaos — a phenomenon shown in the rapid rise of prices. The Japanese had experience of price increases due to unseasonable weather, but otherwise the Tycoon's Government had maintained the rice standard economy. However, after making the commercial treaties, not only rice but also other products were soon exported overseas. Raw silk, cloth, grains (including rice), lamp oil and wax were cited as five leading special products of Japan exported rapidly,¹⁸¹ leading to a domestic shortage. In the meantime, the Government monopolized coal, oxen and sweet potatoes which were essential for daily

¹⁷⁹ Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration*, 138.

¹⁸⁰ Akio Okada (ed.), *Gaikokujin no mita Nihon, Vol. II* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1961), 132.

¹⁸¹ Yukihiro Motoyama, J. S. A. Elisonas and Richard Rubinger (eds.), *Proliferating Talent* (University of Hawaii Press, 1997), 20.

life.¹⁸² By those means, prices were raised to levels which the Japanese had never experienced in the past.

De Wit reported to the Dutch Government in 1861 that the prices of the major Japanese products had risen between 75% and 100%.¹⁸³ Central to this was an article in the commercial treaties with the Western states which specified that the usual rate of duty levied on imports was 20%, while only 5 % was charged on exports.¹⁸⁴ Japanese products were thereby exported without restriction. The rapid rise in prices especially affected the lower samurais.¹⁸⁵ Their salaries were paid in rice, but because of the shortage of rice their living standards were endangered. Thus, they started to criticize the Tycoon's Government which could not take effective action. The only thing the Government could do was to reject the Western states' demand to open new ports by explaining the domestic situation.¹⁸⁶ That, however, could not be a solution.

Another reason for rapidly rising prices related to the exchange rate between gold and silver. At that time, the exchange rate in Japan was 1 to 5, but internationally it was 1 to 15.¹⁸⁷ Foreigners, therefore, just exchanged silver for gold in Japan, making large profits when they returned overseas. As a result, a huge amount of gold flew abroad.¹⁸⁸ De Wit estimated in 1861

¹⁸² Tsunoda, Shidehara (trans.), Smith and Singer (eds.), *An Economic History of Japan*, 242.

¹⁸³ *Dai Nihon Kobunsho*, Vol. 51(2007), 138.

¹⁸⁴ Tsunoda, Shidehara (trans.), Smith and Singer (eds.), *An Economic History of Japan*, 243.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 251.

¹⁸⁶ *Dai Nihon Kobunsho*, Vol. 51, 9.

¹⁸⁷ Norman, *Origins of the Modern Japanese State*, 147.

¹⁸⁸ Hane, 70.

that by exchanging silver for gold in Japan, he could make a profit between 100% and 200%.¹⁸⁹ To solve this problem, the Tycoon's Government changed the gold content of coins so that the quality of Japanese gold coins conformed to the international standard, but for the Japanese, this meant a significant inflation.¹⁹⁰ Living conditions for all Japanese citizens became worse. Furthermore, there were riots attacking the merchants who profited by the rising prices. In the last 30 years of the Tokugawa Shogunate, 786 riots and revolts were reported.¹⁹¹ Since the Tycoon's Government collapsed fully ten years after it had made the commercial treaties, this would suggest that it was not all because of the opening of the ports. However, during those ten years the living standards of the Japanese were certainly threatened by international trade.

Part of the background whereby Japanese products were exported so rapidly was that many were also favoured in the Chinese market.¹⁹² For all these reasons, then, various problems emerged in their economy which the Japanese had never previously experienced. After the Meiji Restoration the

¹⁸⁹ *Dai Nihon Kobunsho*, Vol. 51, 128.

¹⁹⁰ In terms of the Japanese economy under the Tokugawa Shogunate, the following has been suggested: By 1712 the debasements had produced a deleterious effect on the economic interests of a substantial and significant section of the populace. (Kate Wildman Nakai, *Shogunal Politics—Arai Hakuseki and the Premises of Tokugawa Rule* (The Council on East Asian Studies at Harvard University, 1988), 103). The Japanese economy had already started to weaken about one hundred years before the arrival of the Westerners, the main reason being that since 1650 the amount of gold and silver produced was declining. (Nakai, 107). In the meantime, although the Japanese had closed the state, they did allow commercial activities on a small scale, so, a certain amount of gold and silver did go overseas regularly. (Nakai, 106-107). As a result, the Tycoon's Government always had to cut the content of gold and silver in coins during successive reigns. Thus it is hard to assert that simply because of the arrival of the Westerners in the nineteenth century, Japanese living circumstances suddenly changed.

¹⁹¹ Tetsuo Najita and Irwin Scheiner (eds.), *Japanese Thought in the Tokugawa Period* (The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 41.

¹⁹² *Dai Nihon Kobunsho*, Vol. 51, 110.

Tycoon's Government was criticized by the new regime for its diplomatic failure, which had caused serious economic disruption and placed Japan in danger of being colonised by Western states.¹⁹³ While that became useful as a justification for the Meiji Restoration, nevertheless it was true that the "unequal" treaties with the West caused serious fragmentation in both Japanese political and economical life.

The feudal lords were also critical of the Tycoon's Government. Whereas complaints from ordinary citizens were based on the fact that their living circumstances were deteriorating, the feudal lords criticized the governing system itself. The *Tozama* daimyos especially, who had not been allowed to enter national politics for hundreds of years, now, when the Tycoon's Government faced a national crisis, requested to participate in national politics. The Imperial Court supported their actions because Court nobles thereby expected to gain influence. Both these groups were accustomed to obedience, but the national crisis provided an opportunity to promote reform of the governing system.

However, the Tycoon's Government was not in favour of this and reacted severely to suppress those movements. In particular, a counterattack was undertaken by Ii Naosuke called the *Ansei purge* (undertaken in the years of Ansei in Japan). That began when the Imperial Court sent an imperial edict to the Mito-Tokugawa family to attack the Tycoon's Government in 1858.¹⁹⁴ Ii justified the oppression of those who criticized his politics and many people were arrested, not only samurais but also feudal

¹⁹³ Sumiya and Taira (eds.), *An Outline of Japanese Economic History 1603-1940*, 180.

¹⁹⁴ Satow, *Kinse Shiriaku*, 13.

lords and Court nobles. The nobility were mostly forced to retire or to be confined,¹⁹⁵ among whom were several feudal lords who became famous during the era of the Meiji Restoration. Tokugawa Yoshinobu, who became the 15th Tycoon, was one of them. The samurais were mostly executed,¹⁹⁶ one of whom was Yoshida Shoin, later recognized as an idealistic inspiration for the Meiji Restoration.¹⁹⁷ He had sent a letter to Emperor Komei requesting the latter to save Japanese soil.¹⁹⁸ For such men, to criticize the Tycoon's Government meant saving Japan. However, Ii did not think so, and sought to secure the absolutism of the Tycoon's Government. As a result, samurais and *Shishi* who were concerned about Japan's future started to take action by themselves. This consisted of terrorism against both the Tycoon's Government and the foreigners. The purpose of attacking the former was to demonstrate the incompetence of its governance while attacking the latter was based on nationalism.

The most symbolic act of terrorism was the assassination of Ii Naosuke by master-less samurais in March 1860.¹⁹⁹ The top minister of the Tycoon's Government was killed in the middle of the city near Edo castle during daytime. His assassination had two consequences. First, the decline of the Tycoon's Government became apparent to both domestic and Western observers, which meant it could no longer justify the idea of absolute dominance to all the feudal lords. Thus, the Government started to cooperate

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, 12.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 16.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 16.

¹⁹⁸ Cambridge University Library, Oriental document collection, *Bakusei Zakken, Osei Zakken*.

¹⁹⁹ Ishikawa, 105.

with major feudal lords and the Imperial Court in order to reform the Tokugawa Shogunate and to restore the Tycoon's authority. The second consequence was that terrorism and assassination came to be seen as a solution in making political decisions. Thus, terrorism became more widespread in Edo and Kyoto, which the Government could not control. The Dutch vice-consul, Polesbroek, reported to his Government in 1861 the serious threat to peace and order in Edo.²⁰⁰ However, the target for this terrorism was also the foreigners. Examples of terrorism against the British were the first Touzen-ji incident on 5 July 1861 and, the second Touzen-ji incident on 26 June 1862. One British sailor was killed at Nagasaki in July 1861. Then came the Namamugi incident on 14 September 1862. The assassination of Major Baldwin and Lieutenant Bird at Kamakura followed on 24 November 1864. Harry Parkes was attacked on his way to the Imperial Court as late as February 1868. These were attacks only on British subjects; there were more against other foreigners. In fact, Polesbroek reported on 30 November 1864 that he had buried 13 European dead since 1859.²⁰¹ This chaotic situation became one reason why the Tycoon's Government lost the confidence of the Western states. A French representative, Duchene de Bellecourt, expressed grave doubts about the Tycoon's Government in terms of its governance and diplomacy.²⁰² Against this background, Satow

²⁰⁰ *Dai Nihon Kobunsho*, Vol. 51, 311.

²⁰¹ *Journal van Jonkheer Dirk de Graeff van Polesbroek 1857-1870*, 140.

²⁰² *Dai Nihon Kobunsho*, Vol. 44 (1993), 452.

described the Japanese domestic situation after arrival as one in which *political stagnation was mistaken for stability*.²⁰³

Thus, only a few years after contact with Western states began, Japanese society, with its long-established mechanism of political authority, was already under considerable strain. There was neither consensus about how to deal with the foreigners nor agreement about the nature of the threat which they faced. International trade was damaging Japan's traditional economy and the presence of foreigners on Japanese soil was giving impetus to a nationalist spirit, often accompanied by violent attacks. And as the old order appeared to weaken, feudal daimyos saw the opportunity to test further the power of the Tokugawa regime — either directly or by rediscovering the nominal role of the Imperial Court. The samurai class, once defined by duty to their lords, was becoming more difficult to control, either because many had no recognised masters or because they rallied to the Mikado as a focus of loyalty for the protection of the nation.

In the next chapter, the Namamugi incident in 1862 will be discussed. This was important because, through this incident, the incapability of the Tycoon's Government to act as the national government became apparent. It was an essential part of the background to Satow writing *Eikoku Sakuron*.

²⁰³ Norman, *Origins of the Modern Japanese State*, 361.

Chapter III: Namamugi Incident

The Namamugi Incident (in Britain known as the Richardson Affair) happened on 14 September 1862 (in the Japanese calendar, the 21st day, 8th month, 2nd year of Bunkyu). The outline of that incident is that a party from Satsuma, headed by Shimazu Hisamitsu (1817-87), father of the feudal lord of Satsuma, was travelling on the Tokaido, between Edo to Kyoto, while the British merchant, Charles Richardson and three companions (William Marshall, Woodthope Wilson and Mrs. Borrodaile) were on the Tokaido on

their way to Kawasaki. When they met, Satsuma samurais attacked them. Richardson was killed and Marshall and Wilson were injured. The incident was so called on account of nearby Namamugi village.

This incident created a major diplomatic problem between Britain and Japan, which is why, for the purpose of discussing British diplomacy during the Meiji Restoration era, it needs to be analysed. The incident proved to both Westerners and Japanese that the Tycoon's Government lacked the political ability and authority to control Satsuma. As a result, the Tycoon's Government showed that it could not control all the feudal lords. If, through earlier diplomatic negotiations, the Westerners had concluded that the Tycoon was not the national sovereign of Japan, this incident seemed to prove it.

Furthermore, analysing this incident from another point of view, it can be argued that the Richardson affair caused the British to confront the Japanese more severely and that this change in Britain's diplomatic attitude had a psychological impact on the Japanese which moved them towards the Meiji Restoration. Until then, although they had made the commercial treaty with the Tycoon's Government in 1858, the British tended not to focus on commercial activities with the Japanese. Instead, as a commercial foothold in East Asia, the British focused on Canton in China, considering Japan to be far away.²⁰⁴ When Perry first arrived in Japan in 1853 requesting the opening of ports, the British were already established in China, and unlike Perry, who had to sail across the oceans, the British were thus

²⁰⁴ Beasley, *Great Britain and the Opening of Japan, 1834-1858*, 17.

advantageously placed to advance to Japan in terms of geography. Yet although the British recognised that fact, they allowed the Americans precedence, which suggests that the British had less interest in initiating diplomatic and commercial relations. Fox, in 1969, concluded:

By 1854 the British had been glad to let Commodore Perry, acting for the United States, take the risk of opening Japan to the West and hoped to profit by the results.²⁰⁵

Another view is that there was a shortage of British naval force in East Asia, although this cannot be the only reason for not bothering much about Japan.²⁰⁶ True, the British possessed enormous naval power in the nineteenth century, but even they did not have sufficient naval force for maintaining peace and extensive commercial activities in East Asia. Although the British might have been expected to be the first to access Japan, they did not, in fact, do so, contrary to Japanese predictions. The Opium War in 1840-42 had caused nineteenth-century Japanese to have an unimaginable fear of the British because they considered that the British would do exactly the same thing on the Japanese mainland.²⁰⁷

However, that did not mean that every Briton shared the same idea as British officials. In the 1830s there was a conviction, especially in commercial circles, that the British Government should send official missions to Japan and there was analysis whereby Japan had enough

²⁰⁵ Fox, 10.

²⁰⁶ Beasley, *Great Britain and the Opening of Japan, 1834-1858*, 72.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 42.

resources to be developed as a British market in Asia.²⁰⁸ Nevertheless, the British Government was not concerned to establish diplomatic or commercial relations before 1853. Only on 14 October 1854 did the British naval commander, James Stirling, make a treaty of peace, amity and friendship with the Tycoon's Government, and even then Stirling was said to have believed that the British could not properly make such a treaty.²⁰⁹ Not until 21 January 1856 did the Secretary at the Foreign Office, Edmund Hammond, notify the Admiralty that the British Government acknowledged Stirling's actions.²¹⁰ The following statement represented the limited ambition of the British Government. It was in a document sent by Hammond to J. Emerson Tennent, an official at the Office of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade:

But at the same time they give to British ships what they never possessed before, namely, the right of entering certain ports of Japan to effect repairs, and obtain provisions and supplies.²¹¹

Because British trade and diplomacy focused on the market in China, they rarely saw Japan as a business partner. The only thing the British expected from the Japanese was to open ports in cases of emergency or as a part of their commercial activities in China.

Although Lord Elgin made his commercial treaty with the Tycoon on 26 August 1858, this diplomatic attitude did not seem to be changed

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 10.

²⁰⁹ Fox, 11.

²¹⁰ FO881/541A, Hammond to the Secretary of the Admiralty, 21 January 1856.

²¹¹ FO881/541A, Hammond to J. Emerson Tennet, 8 February 1855.

dramatically. Whatever the situation, the main focus for the British remained China and the Japanese market was of secondary importance in East Asia. All that the British Government might expect from the Tycoon's Government was not to make any trouble for British subjects in Japan, otherwise, if incidents arose, Britain would have to deal with unnecessary problems and possibly with huge military expenditure. Unfortunately, though, one British merchant was killed by a Japanese samurai in September 1862, as a result of which the British Government seemed to have started thinking more seriously about its diplomatic relationship with the Japanese. One example of that was that the British began gradually to understand and recognise the nature of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Before then, the Tycoon had been widely recognised by the Westerners as follows:

The Shogun, no matter how dissolute, was not only the recognised head of the government and the monopolist of legitimate foreign trade, but the most powerful lord in Japan's rigidly stratified feudal order. ²¹²

That statement indicates how the Westerners had previously trusted the Tycoon regarding the governance of all Japanese regions. However, following the Richardson affair, the British began to reconsider the status and function of the Tycoon and thereby notice the contradiction within Japanese feudalism. On that point, the Richardson affair seemed to be a turning point not only for the Japanese but also for the British.

²¹² Fox, 22.

Although this incident was not the immediate reason for the collapse of the Tycoon's Government in 1868, it became an important part of the background to it. When, in April 1867, the British Minister, Harry Parkes, met the 15th Shogun, Tokugawa Yoshinobu at Osaka castle, declining to use the word *Majesty* for him but the word *Highness* instead, that was because Parkes had already recognised that Tokugawa Yoshinobu was not sovereign.²¹³ The Namamugi incident was one reason for this change in British diplomacy.

Although this incident caused a significant problem for both states, Japanese and British sources provide different accounts. Captain Vyse of the British Legation reported to Lt-Colonel Edward St. John Neale, who was *Charge' d'Affaires*, like this: Richardson and the three British were moving on the Tokaido two by two, and, when they saw the party from Satsuma, they stopped and tried either to step aside or to turn back, so as not to interfere with the march.²¹⁴ However:

At the moment they were turning they were surrounded
and attacked. ²¹⁵

Neale reported this to the British Government.²¹⁶ Thus, from the British point of view, the British were killed and injured by Satsuma samurais even though they were completely innocent. It was true that at this time there

²¹³ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 196.

²¹⁴ FO881/1130, Neale to Russell, 16 September 1862, inclosure, Vyse to Neale, 15 September 1862.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ FO881/1130, Neale to Russell, 16 September 1862.

were radical Japanese who, in the name of the nationalist spirit of *Jyoi*, wished to attack foreigners. In fact, the British had already experienced two such attacks at the Temple of Touzen in 1861 and 1862, so, when Neale reported, he might well have thought this incident was similar. Ernest Satow supported Neale's analysis, and in his memoir he described the incident as *the most barbarous murder*.²¹⁷ According to the British, Richardson and his companions were the victims of *Jyoi*.

However, Japanese materials convey a different point of view. Hayashi Tadasu, who was a samurai in the Tycoon's Government and later became the first Japanese Ambassador to Britain, contradicted the British version. He cited his American friend, Mr. van Reed, who also met the group from Satsuma on the same day on the Tokaido. Knowing the Japanese custom, Reed got off his horse and stepped aside.²¹⁸ He bowed to them by taking off his hat, after which the Satsuma samurais did nothing and he reached Edo without any problem. Thus, when he heard the news that Richardson had been killed, he remarked that it was because Richardson was ignorant and too proud, which had caused the problem.²¹⁹ Hayashi also wrote that Richardson was told to be careful before his departure, but he answered that he knew how to deal with the Asians so there was no reason to worry.²²⁰ One of the authorities in Japanese historiography, Tokutomi Soho, likewise claimed that Richardson was killed because he ignored a warning by

²¹⁷ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 51.

²¹⁸ Tadasu Hayashi, Yui Masaomi (ed.), *Ato ha Mukashi no Ki* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1970), 112-113.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 112-113.

²²⁰ Ibid., 112-113.

Satsuma samurais as they tried to pass each other forcibly.²²¹ Judging from the Japanese materials, this incident happened because Richardson ignored the Japanese custom. He was not the victim of *Jyoi*.

Perhaps neither side told the truth for fear of admitting any responsibility. Hence both sides claimed themselves to be innocent. Therefore, from the accounts only of the Japanese and British, the truth was hard to define. Fortunately, there was a third party to this incident, material from which helps analyse this affair impartially.

Graeff van Polesbroek, who became Consul-General of the Netherlands in 1863, and a Dutch doctor, Pompe, also left a statement about this incident. Polesbroek hastened to secure the dead body right after he heard the news. He recorded Marshall's testimony, which was that he had advised Richardson to turn back. Richardson had ignored him, so everything thereafter was Richardson's responsibility.²²² Pompe criticised not only Richardson but also the British Government. He defined Richardson's attitude as totally insane,²²³ because, in the circumstances, in no country would anyone be allowed to pass by on horse.²²⁴ As for the British Government, he insisted that they should not react to the affair because it was caused by Richardson's eccentricities.²²⁵ The background to the Richardson incident was therefore totally different from the occasion when Choshu fired on foreign ships passing through the Shimonoseki Strait in

²²¹ Soho Tokutomi, *Ishin heno Taido*, Vol. I (Tokyo: Koudansha Gakujyutsu Bunko, 1993), 406.

²²² *Journal van Jonkheer Dirk de Graeff van Polesbroek 1857-1870*, 126.

²²³ Pompe, 229.

²²⁴ Ibid., 228.

²²⁵ Ibid., 236.

July 1863, as ordered by the Imperial Court. Namamugi happened by accident; it was not because of *Jyoi*.

In terms of using the Tokaido, there was a further difference between the British and Japanese material. According to Neale's report to London, although he was told by the Tycoon's Government that foreigners were expected to refrain from using the Tokaido because the imperial envoy would use that road from Edo to Kyoto on 15 September, he was told only on the day before the incident. Thus, he concluded, it was the Tycoon's Government's fault.²²⁶ His report showed how the Tycoon's Government could not maintain appropriate diplomatic relations with the Westerners, even regarding a domestic matter. Like Neale, Tokutomi also criticised the Tycoon's Government but his point was different. He insisted that the Government did not mention Shimazu Hisamitsu to the foreigners, and as proof he cited a later interview between Neale and an official for foreign affairs. Neale questioned why the Tycoon's Government had not sent official notice of the Satsuma party using the Tokaido just as it sent the notice about the imperial envoy. The official replied that the imperial envoy was a noble belonging to the Imperial Court, whereas Satsuma belonged to the Government.²²⁷ Judging from this answer, it could be surmised that the Tycoon's Government had a responsibility for imperial envoys because they did not belong to the Government, which was why they had to send official notice to the foreigners about their schedule in advance. The Government did

²²⁶ FO881/1130, Neale to Russell, inclosure, Neale to the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs, 15 September 1862.

²²⁷ Tokutomi, *Ishin heno Taido*, Vol. I, 426.

not have to send any notice about Satsuma because they were under the Shogunate. While this was a possible explanation, and even if the Tycoon's Government was confident about managing the Satsuma party, they should still have sent an official notice in advance. Otherwise, the foreigners would not know about their moving on the Tokaido.

The descriptions by Neale and Tokutomi were different in detail, but they shared the same idea: that the Tycoon's Government also had some responsibility for the incident. The Government doubtless considered that the Satsuma party would go back to its feudal area without causing any problem. However, that assumption was based on a feudal code which, after the opening of the country, was hard to maintain because there were now many foreigners who did not know Japanese traditional customs. On that point, the Tycoon's Government should have been more cautious. Furthermore, although it might assert that the Shogunate dominated all the feudal lords, they were not always under its control. This incident thereby revealed another aspect of Japanese politics: that the feudal relationship was only effective when Japan had been closed.

By contrast, Hayashi claimed that the Tycoon's Government had definitely sent notice in advance. According to him, the Government advised that, on that day, the Tokaido would be busy because several lords were planning to use it, but the Westerners did not acknowledge this because the Tokaido was valuable for them to use too.²²⁸ The Government identified a new road next to the Tokaido to avoid possible problems, but Richardson and

²²⁸ Hayashi, 112.

his companions did not use it, and instead moved towards Kawasaki using the Tokaido.²²⁹ Being a samurai of the Government, Hayashi was naturally on the side of the Tycoon. But, by analysing his opinion, it could be considered that the Government recognised a responsibility for protecting the lives and property of foreigners, in which case the Government acted and deserved to be considered as a sovereign body. Since even the Japanese held different views about this incident, it will be hard to attribute exact causation. Nevertheless, the attitude of the Government after the affair led to the Westerners placing less reliance upon it.

After killing Richardson, the Satsuma party continued on the Tokaido, while, against them, strong reactions emerged from the foreign settlement in Yokohama. For example, a French military officer, Jaquemot, insisted that the foreigners should act to arrest Shimazu Hisamitsu as soon as possible.²³⁰ However, Neale rejected his extreme opinion, which Satow approved, because if the foreigners attacked Satsuma that night, then all Japanese would attack foreigners in Japan in vengeance. If that happened, there would be a war between the Western states and Japan.²³¹ After that, Satow concluded, Japan would be in a state of anarchy.²³² He did not worry about which side would win: he was concerned about the collapse of the Japanese governmental system because of a war. According to Alcock, commercial activity in Japan was Britain's main concern²³³ so avoiding further trouble

²²⁹ Ibid., 112.

²³⁰ FO881/1130, Neale to Russell, inclosure, Minutes of a Meeting, members of the Foreign Community of Yokohama, held on the night of the 14th September 1862.

²³¹ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 54.

²³² Ibid., 54.

²³³ Alcock, *The Capital of the Tycoon*, Vol. II, 217.

was the priority. In that way, Neale made a good decision without being influenced by others.

From another point of view, though, Neale's decision was based less on worrying about the future Japan. His reason was rather the commercial treaty which Lord Elgin had signed on 26 August 1858. According to Article V, it was agreed that Japanese who committed crimes against the British would be punished under Japanese laws.²³⁴ That meant if the Westerners now attacked the Satsuma party, it would be a breach of the Treaty. As *Charge' d'Affaires*, Neale would have understood that. Satow's claim in his 1921 memoir, that to avoid creating chaos in Japan all the Western representatives supported the Tycoon's Government in its claim to national sovereignty,²³⁵ was not strictly correct. For Neale, it did not matter whether the national sovereign was the Mikado or the Tycoon. He had to make a decision based on the Articles of the Treaty and had no intention that the British should support the Tycoon. Satow's later writing reflected the theme of *Eikoku Sakuron*, for which purpose he chose to suggest that at this time the British decided in favour of the Tycoon due to concern for Japan's long-term future. Sentences like this allowed modern Japanese to think that, through Satow, the British had been involved in Japanese domestic affairs.

In fact, the attitude of Her Majesty's Government was the same as that of Neale. They simply made a decision based on the 1858 Treaty which had defined the Tycoon as the national sovereign. Lord Russell, as Foreign

²³⁴ FO410/2, Elgin to Malmesbury, 3 September 1858, inclosure, Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Commerce between Her Majesty and the Tycoon of Japan, 26 August 1858.

²³⁵ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 77.

Secretary, ordered Neale accordingly. From the Tycoon's Government, he should request a formal apology and the payment of £ 100,000 as compensation, and, from Satsuma, the execution of the murderer, in front of British naval officers, and the payment of £ 25,000 as compensation.²³⁶ Russell thereby tried to force both the Tycoon's Government and Satsuma to recognise their responsibility. The Tycoon's responsibility was to protect the lives of British subjects, while the responsibility of Satsuma was that they should now resolve the problem peacefully. Russell wanted to show the Japanese what would happen if British nationals were killed, hence, as a deterrent, he made this severe request. At this point it was clear that the Tycoon's Government had already lost a good deal of credibility. The British feared that the Japanese would do the same thing again and that the Tycoon's Government would not restrict radical activists.

Russell's decision was important and it provoked curiosity in Britain. *The Times* of 4 November 1863 later criticized it by referring to a debate in the House of Commons. It asked by what reason Russell sought to punish both the Tycoon's Government and Satsuma.²³⁷ The criticism was that if the British admitted that Satsuma was independent of the Tycoon, then Russell should not have to request anything from the Government in Edo. Equally, if the British admitted Satsuma to be a dependency of the Tycoon, then Russell should not request anything from Satsuma. *The Times* thereby judged Russell's decision as abnormal.²³⁸ This was indeed the truth. Why did

²³⁶ FO881/1135, Russell to Neale, 24 December 1862.

²³⁷ Minamura, 66.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 71-72.

Russell apportion responsibility to both when, according to their diplomacy, the British had defined the Tycoon as the national sovereign in Japan because they had signed the Treaty with him? When requesting the compensation from Satsuma, was he admitting indirectly that Japan was not governed by the Tycoon, thereby formally denying his status? *The Times* might well have anticipated a situation whereby both the Japanese and the other Westerners would misunderstand British diplomacy. But one thing is clear: as a result of this contradiction Japanese historians concluded that the British had already given up on the Tycoon's Government. By citing Satow's memoir in addition, the Japanese drew the apparent conclusion that the British were on the side of the Imperial Court during the Restoration era.

However, one publication supported Russell's decision. It was *The North China Herald* on 11 October 1862. This newspaper first stated that the Namamugi incident had not happened due to *Jyoi*. Richardson and the three others must, therefore, take some responsibility for this affair.²³⁹ From this, it might be concluded that the newspaper did not support Britain's official response to the Tycoon's Government. However, after that, it expressed the surprising view that the British should not demand that the Tycoon's Government arrest the murderer because it had already become apparent that the Tycoon did not possess any political ability to enforce it.²⁴⁰ This opinion reflected a significant truth, because in 1862 the Westerners had already realised that the Tycoon could not govern all the feudal lords.

²³⁹ Committee of International News Publication and Mainichi Communications (ed.), *Gaikoku Shinbun ni Miru Nihon, Vol. I 1852-1873* (Tokyo: Mainichi Communications, 1989), 249.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 250.

Moreover, the paper claimed that the Tycoon was just a usurper; he was not of the imperial bloodline.²⁴¹

In both a spiritual and secular sense, this idea was, of course, correct. The Tycoon was neither the son of the Mikado nor, under Japanese feudalism, could his Government administer or interfere in individual feudal lands. The Government might issue orders to the feudal lords, but it was up to the latter to enact them or not. The British military officer, F. Brinkley, noticed also the existence of paper currency in each feudal land,²⁴² suggesting that they were effectively independent from the Tokugawa Shogunate. They all recognised the Tycoon's Government, but their separate currencies indicated the independent identity of each fiefdom.

Only ten years after the Japanese had officially opened their country in 1854, the Westerners had thus identified the weakness of the administrative system of the Tycoon's Government and it is hard to believe that Russell did not also recognise this and assumed that Satsuma would not follow the orders of the Government. Nevertheless, Britain's Treaty was with the Tycoon, and although they might doubt the political ability of his Government, they could not change their diplomatic stance. Even if Russell's decision looked contradictory, he had to choose that option in order to make Satsuma accept its responsibility.

In fact, Russell's fear was justified when Satsuma officially responded to the Tycoon's Government. Satsuma claimed that the person who killed the foreigner was a masterless samurai, not of Satsuma, who had escaped from

²⁴¹ Ibid., 250.

²⁴² Brinkley, 639.

the area and still not been discovered.²⁴³ This statement showed how they made a fool of the Government, suggesting that Satsuma already looked down upon it.²⁴⁴ The samurais of Satsuma seemed to have concluded that the Tycoon's Government had already lost all political power because during the 260 years of Tokugawa rule the Government had never been disrespected like that.

The samurais of Satsuma might also have understood that the only reason why the Government could maintain a feudal dominance was because Japan had been closed. Since opening Japan, the Government had conducted a series of diplomatic failures with the Western states, and Satsuma could see that the Tycoon could not act as national sovereign, nor did his Government possess authority over the feudal lords. Satsuma did not publicly state this, but its attitude made these assumptions clear. The Namamugi incident was therefore a turning point in Japanese modernization. Satsuma even replied to the Government that if the British came to Kagoshima with military force, Satsuma would react to them alone.²⁴⁵ This statement showed conclusively how the samurais of Satsuma had no confidence in the Government and how emphatically they refused to obey the Tycoon.

Time passed, yet the situation did not change. According to *The Illustrated London News* of 8 August 1863, the British gave another three weeks period of grace for the Tycoon's Government to resolve the situation,

²⁴³ Tokutomi, *Ishin heno Taïdo*, Vol. I, 429.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., 430.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 442.

which was the third time for them.²⁴⁶ It was now almost one year after the incident, but nothing had happened despite Neale's repeated demands. The British had been respecting the Tycoon as national sovereign, which was why they had been so patient. But, after observing the Tycoon's Government for a year, it became obvious to the British that he could not control Satsuma. This was the significant diplomatic failure for the Government in Edo, about which two Bakufu samurais left important statements. These were Shibusawa Eiichi and Tanabe Taichi (who had the experience of visiting Europe as a member of an official mission).

Shibusawa testified that although there were various and contradictory opinions about what to do, Government officials did not expect the British to negotiate directly with Satsuma samurais.²⁴⁷ Of course, the Government could not acknowledge any direct negotiation between the British and Satsuma since the Tycoon would thereby lose the status of national sovereign. Yet the important point in Shibusawa's statement was his admission that various and contradictory ideas had emerged when there could be just one solution: the Government had to deal with Satsuma as soon as possible to maintain its diplomatic position. Confusion within the Government indicated that it had already lost its way in this affair, since if it could not solve the problem then it could not enforce Article V of the 1858 Treaty. If so, the Government could no longer maintain its diplomatic

²⁴⁶ Madoka Kanai (ed. and trans.), *Egakareta Bakumatsu-Meiji-The Late Tokugawa and Meiji Japan engraved and described in The Illustrated London News 1853-1902* (Tokyo: Yushodo Shoten, 1973), 86.

²⁴⁷ Eiichi Shibusawa, *Tokugawa Yoshinobukou Den*, Vol. II (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1967), 239.

relationship with the British because it could not take responsibility for any foreigner's safety. For the British, if the Tycoon could not uphold all Articles of the 1858 Treaty, then they could not regard him any longer as the sovereign of Japan.

In fact, the Government had already revealed its inability to the British when Neale pointed out in October 1862 that the seventeen days promised had already passed for an important official of Satsuma to arrive in Edo.²⁴⁸ Neale had expected that date to be the turning point in settling the Namamugi incident, and had the Government succeeded the British would not have lost confidence. The following conversation between Neale and the official for Foreign Affairs demonstrates the main reason for the British Government's decision.

(Neal): What will the Japanese Government do if the
Prince of Satsuma does not send the guilty persons?

(Japanese official): The Japanese Government cannot arrest
them in the territory of Satsuma, but we are certain
that the steps which have been taken will result in the
production of the offenders.²⁴⁹

Ironically, as early as November 1858 *The Illustrated London News* had reported that the word 'Tycoon' simply meant great servant.²⁵⁰ At that time,

²⁴⁸ FO881/1135, Neale to Russell, 29 October 1862, inclosure, Neale to the Japanese Ministers, 12 October 1862.

²⁴⁹ FO881/1135, Neale to Russell, 29 October 1862, inclosure, Minutes of a Conference between Neale and the Japanese Ministers for Foreign Affairs, held at their Residence in Yeddo, the 23rd of September 1862.

²⁵⁰ Kanai (ed. and trans.), *The Late-Tokugawa and Meiji Japan*, 46.

the British Government had not appreciated that. The Namamugi incident suggested that they should have trusted that publication.

Tanabe Taichi spelt out another criticism of the Tycoon's Government. He pointed out that Tokugawa officials expected Satsuma to be defeated by British military forces ²⁵¹ because they would not admit the Edo Government's authority.²⁵² But this casual attitude proved to be a mistake. As Tanabe indicated, the Government thereby unofficially acknowledged that they could not extend their sovereignty all over Japan and appeared to give up their status as the national representative voluntarily.²⁵³ Likewise, Shibusawa judged that if the British won it would be dishonour for the Japanese, yet if Satsuma won it would cause the downfall of the Tycoon's Government.²⁵⁴ In essence, the Government abdicated authority by this decision and left the British to solve the problem. Lacking political power, and trying to maintain their honour by avoiding failure, the Government did not deal with Satsuma. The outcome, however, was that they lost not only their political standing in Japan but also their credibility with the Westerners.

The fact that the Tokugawa Government implicitly relinquished its sovereignty might be interpreted as shameful. However, modern Japanese historians do not suggest that because they commonly focus on events after negotiations had broken down and the bombardment of Kagoshima which followed on 15 August 1863. As a result, Satsuma recognised advanced

²⁵¹ Tanabe, *Bakumatsu Gaikoudan*, Vol. II, 83.

²⁵² Ibid., 83.

²⁵³ Ibid., 83.

²⁵⁴ Shibusawa, *Tokugawa Yoshinobukou Den*, Vol. II, 239.

British technology and its samurai class changed their political attitude and started to promote modernization. Furthermore, after the bombardment, Satsuma samurais were able to establish a close relationship with the British, with whose support they could eventually achieve the Meiji Restoration. The problem here is that historians concentrate on the result, not the process, and the Government's decision making is ignored. On 24 June 1863 the Tokugawa Government paid the necessary compensation to the British Legation. Historians might consider therefore that in the end the Government could not escape its responsibility.

Yet even though the Government had to pay compensation they could scarcely still define themselves as the national government of Japan because they did nothing about Satsuma. It was a shameful episode for the Tycoon. Compensation was paid nine months after Richardson had been killed when it was too late to take any action. Following the Namamugi incident, British confidence in the Tycoon's sovereign status in Japan was shaken. It was now understandable why Satow defined the Tycoon not as sovereign but as chief of the feudal lords of Japan in *Eikoku Sakuron*, and also why Parkes used the word *Highness* to describe the Tycoon, Tokugawa Yoshinobu.

Although the Tycoon's Government deserved to be criticised over the Namamugi Incident, it is still hard to follow modern Japanese historiography whereby the British subsequently supported Satsuma and significantly interfered in Japanese domestic affairs. This attitude is based on historical works by Tokutomi Soho. According to Tokutomi, Satow

remarked to Satsuma samurai, Saigo Takamori, that although the British had been supporting the Imperial Court, the Mikado and the Court nobles still defined them as barbarians.²⁵⁵ On another occasion, during the civil war, Satow repeatedly asked Saigo: *please take care of this matter as best you can*. Saigo already knew what Satow meant and, wisely, did not respond to him.²⁵⁶ Because Tokutomi is regarded as a major Japanese historical authority and was an eye-witness to the 1867 Restoration, Japanese historians have always trusted his books without question, and, as a result, place the British on the side of the Imperial Court. However, Satow is misunderstood by Tokutomi's account. He was also said to have told Saigo that a British military force was ready to join with the Imperial Court during the civil war. Yet in his memoir, where Satow described this conversation with Saigo, he did not say any such thing. Japanese scholars have believed Tokutomi's version without any proof. Especially after *Ishin Kakumeishi no Hanmen* was published in 1893 the mysticism based on Japanese tradition, of which the Imperial family was the core, became the main point for Tokutomi to argue.²⁵⁷ His approach was to place absolute trust in a nationalist policy whereby foreign pressure might be the exact element to help raise the nationalist spirit. That attitude would contribute to establish absolutism for the Imperial family.

Judging from Satow's memoir, it can be seen that Satow met with many Japanese samurais and his relationship with Saigo does not appear to

²⁵⁵ Tokutomi, *Meiji Ishin to Edo Bakufu*, Vol. II, 253.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 275.

²⁵⁷ Vinh., 55.

be special. Saigo was merely one of them, hence it is hard to believe that Satow complained specifically to him. On the contrary, there is an official document on the British side about their conversation in January 1867 suggesting that Satow insisted that Britain would not care whether Japan was governed by the Mikado or the Tycoon or the Confederate Daimyos, but would just like to know who the true sovereign was.²⁵⁸ His statement indicated that the British did not involve themselves with Japanese domestic affairs. Also, in 1868, during the civil war, the British Legation soon declared neutrality. Thus, although the British had become disillusioned with the Tycoon's Government's political inability in 1862-3 that did not mean that they switched allegiance to the Imperial Court right away. In 1866 the British opened tariff convention talks with the Tokugawa Government and renewed the 1858 Treaty. Officially, therefore, the British still treated the Tycoon as national sovereign even after the Namamugi incident. Thus, it is hard to accept the traditional Japanese view that the British had actively encouraged the Japanese to embark upon their modernization. That view emerged after the foundation of the Meiji Government for the purpose of justifying its existence.

There is one aspect of the Namamugi Incident which modern Japanese historians do not discuss. It concerns the murderer of Richardson. Neale demanded that Satsuma execute the murderer and because Satsuma refused to do so the negotiation was broken off and the bombardment of Kagoshima

²⁵⁸ FO345/11, Miscellanea, 17 January 1867.

followed. After this, Satsuma paid compensation to the British, but whether they handed over the murderer was not confirmed. After the bombardment, the British likewise did not mention the murderer. Judging from both sides' attitudes, it has to be concluded that there was no execution.

Did the British withdraw their demand in return for compensation? It is difficult to conclude that because, after this incident, in several cases where foreigners were killed by radical Japanese, the Westerners demanded that the Tycoon's Government execute the murderers. For example, on 21 November 1864 British officers Major Baldwin and Lt. Bird visited Kamakura where they were attacked and killed by Japanese. Afterwards, the Government arrested the murderers and they were executed in front of British representatives. Satow wrote about this case in his memoir.²⁵⁹ On 4 February 1868, after only a small affair when Bizen (modern Okayama) samurais fired at some French sailors, the Imperial Court nonetheless executed one culpable samurai in front of French representatives. On 8 March 1868, too, when Tosa (modern Kouchi) samurais fired at French sailors in Sakai, the Imperial Court did the same thing. These cases showed clearly that when Japanese committed crimes they were executed in front of foreigners without exception. So why not after the Namamugi incident?

On 8 July 1864 Parkes arrived in Japan to succeed Alcock. Parkes was certainly not averse to demanding the execution of murderers as shown by the *Icaros* incident in 1867 when two sailors from the British ship *Icaros* were killed by Japanese. However, Parkes appeared to take no action over

²⁵⁹ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 93.

arresting the murderer of Richardson in 1864. Perhaps because the Namamugi Incident had happened when he was not in Japan? This is unlikely because the British believed a deterrent was necessary. So did Parkes also make an effort to find the murderer? In one secondary source, the Japanese scholar investigating the Namamugi incident suggests that Parkes might have negotiated with the Satsuma samurais in secret.²⁶⁰ One historical fact is cited: that two days after the arrival of Parkes in Japan, the Satsuma samurai, Narahara Kizaemon, died of disease²⁶¹ and Narahara is now widely thought to have killed Richardson. However, the Japanese material relating to this was edited after the foundation of the Meiji Government; indeed, official material covering the murder of Richardson and the bombardment of Kagoshima was edited as late as December 1892, making it difficult to accept as a reliable primary source. No eye-witness record was produced and it is thus impossible to be certain whether Narahara was the real murderer. Because Parkes had been told in 1864 that the murderer was already dead, he could take the matter no further. There may always be suspicion surrounding the death of Narahara. His timely death certainly maintained Satsuma's dignity, and the Meiji Government's official version may not reflect historical truth in so far as the new regime was preoccupied with establishing its own legitimacy and persuading the nation that the emergence of its modern Government structure had saved Japan from colonisation. It is possible that the British had to be content with

²⁶⁰ Yoshihide Nagaoka, *Shinshaku Namamugi Jiken Monogatari* (Tokyo: Bungei Shunju Kikaku Shuppan, 2008), 137-138.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 93.

the compensation payments from the Tycoon's Government and from Satsuma.

On the surface, Richardson's death at Namamugi in 1862 was only one of a number of outrages which resulted in the death of foreigners in Japan and for which Western states demanded punishment and compensation. Yet unlike others, it gave rise to a serious diplomatic clash with the British, and it exposed, for both foreigners and Japanese to see, the ineffectiveness of the Tycoon's Government when obliged to call powerful daimyos to account. Clearly the Tycoon did not rule all of Japan. Why, then, were foreign states treating with him, as if he was head of a national government, when he could not enforce either his own domestic will or the binding international agreements which he had entered into? Unable to exact compensation or a satisfactory acknowledgement of responsibility from Edo, the British diverted their frustration towards Satsuma by way of a naval attack on Kagoshima. These events, surrounding and following Richardson's murder on the Tokaido, took place within months of Satow's arrival in Japan and inevitably helped to shape his ideas relating to the political situation in the country.

Chapter IV: Analysis of volume I and II of *Eikoku Sakuron*

Ernest Satow wrote essays for *The Japan Times* in 1866 which are recognized as a turning point in Japanese modernization. By analyzing not only Japanese history and its value, but also by reviewing the historical identity of the Mikado and the Tycoon, he concluded that the Tycoon should not be the person representing Japan. He emphasised the existence of the Mikado and appealed for all Japanese to be united under the Mikado. In the

meantime, he suggested to the Western states why they could not establish appropriate diplomatic relationships with Japan. According to him, the reason was because Western states had made commercial treaties with the person who was not the sovereign of Japan. Thus, in these essays, he appealed not only to the Japanese but also to the Westerners.

Surprisingly, Satow was not a major person in the diplomatic relationship between Britain and Japan, his name first appearing in official Japanese documents in the 8th month and 20th day of the first year of *Keio* (9 October, 1865) regarding the new house for the British consul in Hakodate.²⁶² Presumably, his presence was requested at the negotiations simply because he was able to speak and write the Japanese language. Six months later, he wrote the essays for *The Japan Times*, although it is hard to believe that in just six months he became a major figure at the British Legation. It is natural to assume that his status was unchanged. Nevertheless, even as a junior diplomat, his essays had a huge psychological impact.

Before discussing Satow's essays, there is one serious question which has to be considered. Why when he wrote essays twice for *The Japan Times* on 16 March and 19 May 1866 (he was said to have written another essay in April, but that essay has always been missing) in both cases did he write anonymously and without using any title? It must be for a political reason. In 1868, when Japan entered civil war, Her Majesty's Government ordered

²⁶² Kusuya, 223.

the British Legation to maintain neutrality.²⁶³ It is easy to understand the reason for non-interference in Japanese domestic affairs. However, Satow discussed Japanese domestic affairs with an attitude beyond the bounds of British diplomatic instructions. That is why he must have recognized the need to write anonymously.

In fact, Satow never said anything about these essays. In his memoirs, *A Diplomat in Japan*, he made no definite statements about them. In one place only is there a related reference, where he confessed that his essay became a pamphlet and was distributed among the Japanese under the name of *Eikoku Sakuron*. The following is his account:

With the aid of my teacher, Numata Torasaburo, a retainer of the prince of Awa, who knew some English, I put them into Japanese in the form of a pamphlet for the perusal of his prince, but copies got into circulation, and in the following year, I found myself to be favourably known through this means to all the daimios retainers whom I met in the course of my journeys.²⁶⁴

According to him, therefore, his essay was written to be handed to the feudal lord of Awa (modern Tokushima). If this were true, it could be concluded that he did not have any intention to appeal more widely to the Japanese. However, the following happened:

In the end the translation was printed and sold in all the bookshops at Ozaka and Kioto under the title of *Ei-Koku Saku-ron*, English policy, by the Englishman

²⁶³ FO881/1727, Stanley to Parkes, 8 April 1868.

²⁶⁴ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 159.

Satow, and was assumed by both parties to represent the views of the British Legation.²⁶⁵

One thing must be made clear. Satow admitted only to writing the essays which became the pamphlet, not the ones in *The Japan Times*. Thus, even if he was identified as the writer of *Eikoku Sakuron* in the Japanese version, that does not prove conclusively that he was the author of the English version.

Before any analysis, some information is needed about *The Japan Times*. In the foreign settlement in Yokohama, several newspaper companies existed; *The Japan Commercial News* was one of them. However, because of financial troubles, that company had to suspend publication. In May 1865 the manager of First Bank in Yokohama, Charles Rickerby, bought the company and from September of that year, he began to publish the newspaper, *The Japan Times*.²⁶⁶ Yet just three years after that *The Japan Times* was officially discontinued.²⁶⁷ The reason was that although the paper hired excellent journalists, Rickerby did not have enough ability in management.²⁶⁸ It appeared that *The Japan Times* did not maintain an open-minded position and was just criticising the Tycoon's Government for reasons of populism.²⁶⁹ At the time of the Meiji Restoration the population of

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 159.

²⁶⁶ Hachiro Ebihara, *Nihon Ouji Shinbun Zasshi-shi* (Tokyo: Meicho Fikyu Kai, 1934), 63.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 63. However, he published a separate volume, *The Japan Times Overland Mail*, which the Imperial University of Tokyo preserved until the volume of December 1869. Thus, he presumably continued his work until that time. (Ibid., 63).

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 66.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 71.

the foreign settlement in Yokohama was considered to be about 500.²⁷⁰ There were other newspapers there, so not all the foreigners might have read *The Japan Times*. The length of Satow's essays was about one page for each, but there was no title or name of author. Thus, although the content of his essays was significant for the Japanese, it is possible that his essays were not so well known among the Westerners.

What then, was Satow's motive for writing? As he described it in *The Japan Times*:

My proposal was that the Tycoon should descend to his proper position as a great territorial noble, and that a confederation of daimios under the headship of the Mikado should take his place as the ruling power.²⁷¹

He did not deny the identity of the Japanese national governing system. However, he denied the legality of the treaties which Britain had made with the Tycoon's Government in 1854 and 1858 because Her Majesty's Government had been acknowledging the Tycoon as head of state until 1866, even though the latter apparently denied this status. Satow thereby implicitly rejected the propriety of British diplomacy which was why his essays had to be written anonymously. Satow was neither an anarchist nor revolutionary. He returned to Japan as British Minister in 1895 as a very able and skilful diplomat. However, his idea in 1866 contained the possibility

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 73.

²⁷¹ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 159.

of destroying the diplomatic relationship between Britain and Japan, which was why it had an enormous psychological impact on the Japanese.

Satow, then, had a specific reason for writing *Eikoku Sakuron*. After analyzing the historical relationship between the Mikado and the Tycoon, he defined it as follows:

All that the Mikado had given was a general authority
to conclude treaties with foreign countries.²⁷²

Satow thereby recognized the hidden truth. In a secular aspect, the status of the Tycoon was higher than that of the Mikado, which was why he could make a treaty with foreign states. However, the treaties should be ratified by the Mikado each time, otherwise they would not be validated. In other words, without the imperial grant, the Tycoon could not make treaties. Satow might have been the first person who recognized that truth having experienced a similar situation in 1865. At that time, the Western states requested the Tycoon's Government to open the port of Hyogo (modern Kobe) earlier than the date which had been designated in the London Protocol of 1862. He attended that negotiation as interpreter and might well have realised that the Tycoon's Government lacked authority in both international diplomacy and domestic politics. If this experience led him to write *Eikoku Sakuron*, then it becomes easier to understand the background to why Satow criticised the governmental system of the Tycoon in his memoir.²⁷³

²⁷² Ibid., 155.

²⁷³ Ibid., 156.

In the meantime, when the Tycoon made treaties with the Western states or exchanged official documents with them, he expressed his status as *Majesty*. Satow questioned this as follows:

In the English text the Tycoon was spoken of as *His Majesty*, and thus placed on a level with the Queen. In the Japanese version, however, this epithet was rendered by the equivalent of *Highness*, and it was thus to be inferred that our sovereign was of lower rank than the Mikado. Moreover, the word *queen* had been translated by a title which was borne by the great-grand-daughters of a Mikado.²⁷⁴

Hence the Tycoon's Government used the word *Majesty* for the purpose of trying to make an equal relationship with the Western states. Satow might have wished to question this approach when he decided to write *Eikoku Sakuron*.

It is uncertain whether he could have predicted its impact. However, for the Japanese, it can be stated that without his essay they could not have begun their modernization because, without *Eikoku Sakuron*, nobody could have envisaged a political structure which was not associated with feudalism.

Vol I of *Eikoku Sakuron* makes the following statement:

Accustomed as are the foreign merchants of Yokohama to see in their port vessels of war flying the flag of the "morning Sun"—the arrival of a merchant steamer, with the private ensign of an independent Daimio at the main, still

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 165.

cannot occur at present without causing some slight decree of excitement.²⁷⁵

In his memoir, using an example of a ship from Satsuma,²⁷⁶ Satow insisted the same. What he had perhaps intended to complain about in *Eikoku Sakuron*, and later his memoir, was that foreigners were not allowed to trade with the Japanese freely, since that was an undeniable fact. But in fact, since 1858 the Japanese had started to trade with Western states in accordance with the Treaty of *Ansei* even though, in reality, the Tycoon's Government had dominated and regulated all the international trade. No feudal lords or ordinary merchants had been allowed to join it.

What was the problem with this? According to Article XIV of Elgin's 1858 Treaty:

At each of the ports open to trade, British subjects shall be at full liberty to import from their own or other ports, and sell there, and purchase therein, and export to their own or any other ports, all manner of merchandize, not contraband, paying the duties thereon, as laid down in the Tariff annexed to the present Treaty, and no other charges whatsoever.

With the exception of munitions of war, which shall only be sold to the Japanese Government and foreigners, they may freely buy from Japanese, and sell to them, any articles that either may have for sale, without the intervention of any Japanese officers in such purchase or sale, or in making or receiving payment for the same; and all classes of Japanese may purchase, sell, seep, or use any articles sold to them by British subjects.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁵ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

²⁷⁶ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 159.

²⁷⁷ FO405/2, Elgin to Malmesbury, 3 September 1858.

The important part is the latter paragraph wherein the British were allowed to buy products from the Japanese freely and also were allowed to sell their produce in Japan without interruption by Japanese officials. Both British and Japanese had the right to promote commercial activities freely.

However, that agreement was not being fulfilled. Satow insisted that when a ship from Satsuma tried to enter the port of Yokohama, officials of the Tycoon's Government ordered them to anchor to the side of Kanagawa, which was far from Yokohama, to prevent communication with the foreigners.²⁷⁸ That was an obvious example of how the Tycoon's Government had been ignoring the spirit of Article XIV. Satow tried to point out this contradiction to readers of *The Japan Times*. He reported that the captain of that ship had tried to sell Japanese products to the Europeans in accordance with Article XIV; governmental officials had not only prohibited their commercial activities but also refused the crew permission to land at the port.²⁷⁹

Judging from the first part of his memoir and from *Eikoku Sakuron*, it was clear that the reason why Satow criticised the Tycoon was not because Japan was under feudalism but because of the treaty condition. He argued that with the Tycoon's Government the British could not promote commercial activities. But whatever the reason, his attitude was to have a significant impact on the Japanese.

By what logic did Satow claim that the Tycoon could not provide leadership regarding international politics? An eye-witness of the later Meiji

²⁷⁸ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 159.

²⁷⁹ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

Government, F. Brinkley, explained the historical background to the authority of the Tycoon. It was that on 28 March 1603 the Mikado had appointed Tokugawa Ieyasu as Tycoon and acknowledged his full military power.²⁸⁰ This meant that he had achieved victory all over other feudal lords and as a result was allowed to govern Japan. Nevertheless, though appointed, he was not a member of the Imperial family. Thus, even if the Tycoon tried to present himself as the national head of Japan, foreigners could not accept him as that. For the foreigners, the Tycoon had been entrusted to govern Japan but could not define himself as the true representative of the Japanese people in diplomacy because the Tycoon was not from the bloodline of the Imperial Court. Satow criticised the Tycoon by using the phrase *extraordinary presumption* in *Eikoku Sakuron*²⁸¹ because the Tycoon had faced Elgin in diplomatic negotiation as if he were the true sovereign of Japan. The reality was that since the late Middle Ages, warriors dominated Japan by extending feudalism and as a result the Tycoon became recognized as the national head. Furthermore, Tokugawa Ieyasu made the code, *Kinchu narabi ni kuge sho hatto* (Rules of the Imperial Court, and the Court Nobles) in 1613,²⁸² and by limiting their activities by that code he could control the Imperial Court. That was why, when Graeff van Polesbroek passed the imperial palace at Kyoto in April 1858, he confessed that the Mikado's residence was less magnificent than the house of the magistrate of

²⁸⁰ Brinkley, 562.

²⁸¹ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

²⁸² Brinkley, 576.

the Tycoon's Government in Nagasaki.²⁸³ The authority of the Mikado had been almost forgotten since the late Middle Ages, and under Tokugawa Ieyasu, the Mikado and the Imperial Court had been excluded from national politics legally. Yet Tokugawa Ieyasu must have recognized that although he possessed military superiority against all other feudal lords, he did not govern directly across all Japan. That might be one reason why, up to the time of Perry's arrival in 1853, no Japanese had forgotten about the spiritual role of the Mikado in 250 years. However, in the 1860s, as international trade increased, not only the Japanese but also the Europeans started to see this inconsistency within the governance system of Japan.

Although Satow criticised the Tycoon for making treaties with Western states without eligibility,²⁸⁴ there were counter opinions. A Japanese historian, Tanabe Taichi, who joined the Tycoon's Government mission as an interpreter when they concluded the London Protocol of 1862, claimed that the 1854 treaty of amity and friendship with Perry had been based on a concept of universal law and international common sense, so there was no

²⁸³ *Journaal van Jonkeer Dirk de Graeff van Polesbroek*, 75.

²⁸⁴ However, Augustus H. Mounsey, who worked as a secretary at the British Legation from 1876 to 1878, questioned the credibility of that idea. (Augustus H. Mounsey, *The Satsuma Rebellion – An Episode of Modern Japanese History* (London: John Murray, 1879), 7). In fact, he repeated the opinion which had been heard from Satow, which was that neither constitutional law nor practice prohibited the Shogun from entering into treaty relations with foreign powers. (Mounsey, 7). As an example, Satow had pointed out that when Tokugawa Ieyasu granted extensive trading privileges to the Dutch and English, he did not consult with the Mikado. (Mounsey, 7). Clearly then, in the 1870s Satow had shifted his view from what he had believed in the 1860s.

reason to question it.²⁸⁵ Furthermore, an eye-witness, Frederick Dickins, analysed the political situation in Japan at that time as follows:

In 1858, there was, indeed, no other Japanese authority who could even be approached on the subject. All the acts of the Japanese state, inclusive of the decrees against Christianity and of the very decree of isolation itself, during the earlier Shogunate and during the whole of Tokugawa period, were the acts of the Shogun alone; neither Mikado nor Daimio had any concern with them.²⁸⁶

Dickins defended the Tycoon because he was the only person who could negotiate with the Western states. In fact, Satow was in a minority for criticizing the Tycoon as being unsuited for diplomacy. Because the Mikado and Court nobles had been excluded from national politics, it was impossible to bring them into any international negotiation. When considering that background, it appeared more natural that the Tycoon should enter into international diplomacy.

Even if there were people who questioned the isolation of the Mikado, it would have been impossible to express that opinion under the Tokugawa Shogunate, because they were not only censored severely but also there was no concept of a public press. Even after the foundation of the Meiji Government, Joseph Longford pointed out that the number of newspapers in Japan was fewer than in Britain.²⁸⁷ It needed several more years for the Japanese to appreciate the essence of journalism. Thus, under the Tokugawa

²⁸⁵ Tanabe, *Bakumatsu Gaikoudan*, Vol. I, 8.

²⁸⁶ Dickins, 19.

²⁸⁷ Longford, 173.

Shogunate, although Satow might be irritated by the situation, the Japanese had a fixed concept of the Tycoon's dominance such as nobody questioned, and even if they did question it there was no method of dissemination. That was the background to the psychological impact of *Eikoku Sakuron*. Satow might even have realised that he could take the lead in spreading a political idea among the Japanese.

Satow analyzed Japanese domestic affairs in the 1850s. He did not investigate the illegality of the Tycoon further in *Eikoku Sakuron*, but he left both Japanese and foreigners to reconsider the characteristics of the Shogunate by the following statements:

It must be borne in mind that the Tycoon, though claiming to conduct the Government of Japan, is in reality, or was at the time when the first treaties were made, only the head of a Confederation of Princes.²⁸⁸

Accordingly, the Tycoon could not be the true sovereign of Japan since it was proved by historical facts that his Government could not control all Japan. Except in the directly controlled Tokugawa regions, there were feudal lords, and in each fief there were various laws which applied only there. Furthermore, a paper currency which was called *han-satsu* existed in each region.²⁸⁹ This meant that the Tycoon's Government was not a centralized government. It is interesting that after the foundation of the Meiji Government, the Japanese claimed two disadvantageous mistakes which the Tycoon's Government had made in the treaties with the West. One was

²⁸⁸ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

²⁸⁹ Brinkley, 639.

extraterritoriality and the other was the low rate of customs duty. However, the Japanese had already experienced the essence of extraterritoriality by admitting the existence of feudal lords. Because the Japanese had been isolated they could not see that there had been a form of extraterritoriality in Japan. Furthermore, even under the Tokugawa Shogunate, the low rate of tariff had been a matter for discussion.

Another eye-witness, J. H. Gubbins, pointed out the serious problem thus created by the Tycoon's governance system: except for the region under his direct control, everywhere else remained isolated as before.²⁹⁰ Gubbins concluded that although the Tycoon's Government had given up the isolation policy and opened the ports, the regions of many feudal lords could not enjoy any benefit. This was true and meant that the Tycoon's Government had been negligent in enforcing the commercial treaty with Britain. Gubbins's opinion reinforced Satow's claim that the Tycoon's Government did not abide by Article XIV. Not only that, Satow could cite Article XIV of the 1858 Treaty to prove that the Tycoon had not control over all Japan.

From this part of his statement, it can be assumed that Satow tried to appeal not to the Japanese but to the Europeans; because the Japanese could not understand the essence of Article XIV it would be pointless for Satow to appeal this point to them. However, although Satow had been focusing on Article XIV, he did not think all the Japanese ports should be opened. He noted that there were 20 independent feudal lords in Japan²⁹¹ and if all of

²⁹⁰ J. H. Gubbins, *The Progress of Japan 1853-1871* (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1911), 76.

²⁹¹ He might call these *Major Daimio*.

their ports were opened, commercial activity would decline. He concluded that one or two ports would be enough.²⁹² Satow did not mention which ports, but according to Nobutoshi Hagiwara, who had followed the life of Satow, those might be Kagoshima and Shimonoseki.²⁹³ It appeared contradictory, of course, that Satow should focus on one or two ports after he had been claiming the illegality of excluding feudal lords from international trade. However, his intention here was not to discuss how many ports might be opened but rather to consider whether the Tycoon's Government could open another port or not. He was not an economist, hence did not expect to have to discuss how many open ports would be beneficial for both Britain and Japan.

In fact, Satow wrote as follows:

So long, however, as we continue to have a treaty with
the Tycoon only, and not with Japan, it will never take place.²⁹⁴

By writing such a clear statement, he showed himself at odds with the Tycoon's Government. Discussion of one or two ports was therefore only a method of promoting discussion for what he really intended. It is hard to be certain what incident led him to adopt that attitude, but in his memoir, he wrote as follows:

It was the keynote of a new policy which recognized the
Mikado as the sovereign of Japan and the Tycoon as his lieutenant.

²⁹² *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

²⁹³ Nobutoshi Hagiwara, *Anesuto Sato Nikkisho—Toi Gake, Vol. III, Eikoku Sakuron* (Tokyo: Asahi Newspaper, 1999), 226.

²⁹⁴ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

We gave up the use of *Tycoon*, which my reading had taught me was properly a synonym for the Mikado.²⁹⁵

The major reason for Satow promoting this discussion of port opening was to emphasise the ineligibility of the Tycoon to govern Japan and because he feared that a situation would arise causing a serious problem in the commercial relationship between Britain and Japan. Also, as a diplomat, he might have recognized the serious error which the Tycoon had committed when he made treaties with the West which had come into effect without imperial ratification. In consequence, Satow boldly proposed a new idea for Japanese governance:

We gravely and seriously advocate a radical change.
What we want is not a Treaty with a single potentate,
but one binding on and advantageous to everyone in the
country.²⁹⁶

Satow did not identify the Tycoon as *single potentate* directly, but judging from his previous discussion it was easy to guess who he had in mind. Then, he apparently denied the validity of treaties with the Tycoon. This was the point which impacted upon those Japanese who had been criticizing the Tycoon's Government since they could now use *Eikoku Sakuron* as a guideline. By stressing the existence of *Eikoku Sakuron*, they could also cite British hostility toward the Tycoon's Government in order to justify their own opposition.

²⁹⁵ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 165.

²⁹⁶ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

In Japanese historiography, Britain's anti-Tycoon stance has been universally accepted. For that reason, the Japanese have always assumed that the British expected the complete collapse of the Tycoon's Government in the early period of the Meiji Restoration. But did Satow really expect that to occur? He might have complained about the actions of the Tycoon's Government, but it seems that he did not expect its complete collapse. As he said in his memoir,²⁹⁷ he wished to revise the treaty which the British had made with the Tycoon, and also to renovate the system of national governance. He did not express radical opinions, such as the banishment of the Tycoon or the encouragement of any anti-establishment movement. In fact, he wrote as follows:

We must give up the worn-out pretence of acknowledging the Tycoon to be sole ruler of Japan, and take into consideration the existence of the other co-ordinate powers.²⁹⁸

He thereby questioned the political authority of the Tycoon, but he never suggested the collapse of the Tycoon's Government nor condemned the governance system by which it had been maintained. Rather, he argued that everybody, include the Tycoon himself, should stop recognizing the Tycoon as the sole ruler of Japan. In fact, in 1867 Satow met Saigo Takamori and made the following statement:

Whether Japan is governed by Mikado, Bakufu, or becomes a Confederation, we don't care. But we should

²⁹⁷ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 159.

²⁹⁸ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

like to know who is the real head.²⁹⁹

Satow and the British were focusing on international trade; they did not much care who became a representative of Japan.

The Japanese who read the above paragraph in *The Japan Times*, however, must have concluded that Satow represented the will of the British, and the samurais of Satsuma quickly responded. In June 1866, three months after the first volume appeared, Parkes visited Kagoshima to meet Saigo. In the past, it has been widely accepted that both Parkes and Saigo could agree about the idea expressed in *Eikoku Sakuron*. The scholar of Japanese history, Takashi Ishii, has confessed that in the past he attached much importance to their agreement.³⁰⁰ However, he subsequently changed his view after considering the content of their conference. According to Ishii, Saigo requested that Parkes should cite the bad faith of the Tycoon's Government over opening the port of Hyogo. However, Parkes declined Saigo's request, insisting that the foreigners never joined or interfered with Japanese domestic affairs.³⁰¹ This is one example of how long-accepted aspects of Japanese history needed to be re-evaluated.

²⁹⁹ FO345/11, Miscellanea, 11 January 1867. Also, his diary of 8 January 1867 confirmed that Satow said the same thing to Date Munenari, the ex-lord of Uwajima. When Date told Satow that Japan should be a confederate state, Satow replied that whatever state the Japanese founded, it would be none of our business. (National Archives, London, PRO 30/33/15/1, *Satow Diary*, 8 January 1867).

³⁰⁰ Ishii, *Meiji Ishin to Gaiatsu*, 103.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 104.

Ishii provides another example. This was on 16 February 1867 when Komatsu Tatewaki, who was the major retainer of Satsuma, met Satow and Mitford in Osaka. Komatsu insisted that if the British Minister made a treaty with the Mikado directly it would significantly damage the Tycoon. However, Mitford replied that if any feudal lord wished action for the future of Japan then he should be the first to do so.³⁰² Despite this reply, Komatsu still expected British action, so he entreated Mitford to ask whether the British Minister might express his distrust of the Tycoon's Government in a simple statement. Komatsu urged that if Parkes said that, not only would the other Western states but also the major Japanese feudal lords be united behind one idea. However, Mitford's attitude did not change and he again declined Komatsu's request, claiming that Komatsu should not expect anything from the British.³⁰³ When Parkes received a report of this from Mitford, he judged this attitude to be highly appropriate.³⁰⁴

These episodes showed one important truth: that the Japanese, especially the samurais of Satsuma, only appreciated Satow's idea according to their own interests and that they misunderstood if they thought that the British had been expecting the collapse of the Tycoon's Government. Nevertheless that idea survived among the Japanese, and when the Meiji Government, of which Satsuma was the centre, had been founded, it became orthodoxy. Even in present times, the Japanese widely believe that the British were on the side of Satsuma. Some people have even criticised Satow

³⁰² Ibid., 107.

³⁰³ Ibid., 108.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 108.

as too presumptuous in interfering in Japanese politics. Yet judging from these decisions by Parkes, Satow and Mitford, it seems clear that the British never intended any interference in Japanese domestic affairs. That reinforces Satow's statement that Britain did not care who became the leader of Japan. Even so, many Japanese did not anticipate that, and subsequently analysed the whole process of the Meiji Restoration according to their earlier expectations.

In *The Japan Times*, Satow concluded as follows:

In other words we must supplement or replace our present treaties, by treaties with the CONFEDERATE DAIMIOS of Japan.³⁰⁵

He did not mention anything about the collapse of the Tycoon's Government. Furthermore, he proposed the formation of a confederation of Daimios, so he presumably considered that feudalism would be maintained or else there would be no structure for Japanese society. Satow must therefore have considered that the Japanese should retain the Tycoon. Satow did not express total disapproval of Japan's social system; he just claimed that the Tycoon should not be the representative of Japan and that his Government should not be the administrative body for Japan. According to *Eikoku Sakuron*, when translated into Japanese, this attitude was expressed by making the following points:

1. We do not expect to make treaties with one person.

³⁰⁵ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

2. We know that the Tycoon is not the true sovereign of Japan.
3. We know there are several feudal lords who possessed the same political power and authority as the Tycoon.
4. We are expecting to make the new treaty with those feudal lords, or modifying the present treaty with the Tycoon.³⁰⁶

Judging from the above, it was perhaps natural for the Japanese to conclude that the British adopted an anti-Tycoon policy. It is not certain if the translator intentionally wrote as above, or whether the translator did not possess a full command of the English language. Nevertheless, by this translation the samurais of Satsuma very likely misunderstood the British attitude, assumed that the British were on the side of Satsuma and would willingly fight against the Tycoon's Government with them. Either that or possibly they intentionally distorted Satow's idea for the purpose of promoting the anti-Tycoon movement. After all, Satow had complained about treaty implementation by the Tycoon, and the samurais of Satsuma might therefore justify their actions by pointing that out, and quoting *Eikoku Sakuron* as proof of it. The samurais of Satsuma were seeking proof to justify their opposition and Satow's essays were useful for their ambitions.

In fact, comparing the statement in *The Japan Times* and the Japanese version of *Eikoku Sakuron*, there was a significant difference in one place. In *The Japan Times* Satow wrote:

It would not be a political revolution, deposing the

³⁰⁶ Hagiwara, 228.

Tycoon from the position which he arrogated as head of the Government, for that has taken place already.³⁰⁷

His point was that the Tycoon had already fallen from the position of national sovereign, so any action against him would not be a political revolution. In the English version, there was nothing which qualified the word, Tycoon. However, in the Japanese version, the Tycoon was described as *the person who pretended himself as the Tycoon*.³⁰⁸ Japanese in the 1860s were not familiar with English and most commonly people listened to a translation from a senior official's writings. The Japanese version of *Eikoku Sakuron* goes some way to explain how the Japanese misunderstood Britain's attitude.

Although Satow did not criticise the Tycoon directly, he calmly analysed the position of the Tycoon and concluded as follows:

We have lately seen the Tycoon acknowledge by his actions that without the sanction of the Mikado they would never be carried out or be recognized by the Daimios, and from this men have naturally and reasonably concluded the Mikado to be the superior.³⁰⁹

From Satow's point of view, when the Tycoon had requested imperial ratification for the treaties with the foreigners, that became the turning point at which the Japanese commonly understood that the Mikado was superior to the Tycoon. By emphasizing that obvious fact, he demonstrated the temporal as well as the spiritual superiority of the Mikado, whereas the

³⁰⁷ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

³⁰⁸ Hagiwara, 229.

³⁰⁹ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

Tycoon's Government had long concealed that idea by enforcing the *Rules of the Imperial Court and the Court Nobles of 1615* and thereby intentionally hidden the Mikado from society. That was why when Alcock asked about the condition of the Mikado, one official replied that nobody could see the Mikado.³¹⁰

Satow effectively rescued the Mikado from that situation by demonstrating his superiority and by explaining that although the Tycoon's Government made treaties and claimed their effectiveness, those treaties would be meaningless without imperial ratification. For the Japanese to consider that any imperial grant would be unnecessary in diplomacy would mean denying the existence of the Mikado, which would call into question Japanese national identity. In fact, all the treaties of 1858 were not ratified until November 1865. In international law, it could be argued that the Tycoon's Government established diplomatic and commercial relations with Western states based on ineffective treaties. Against that background, Satow wrote as follows:

A notion however, has arisen out of this that a Treaty with the Mikado will be a good thing.³¹¹

By using this euphemistic expression, he nevertheless denied the validity of the treaty with the Tycoon. He might, of course, have reached the conclusion that the Tycoon's Government could not properly represent Japan after reviewing its poor diplomatic procedures. Yet at the same time, he suggested

³¹⁰ FO46/16, Miscellaneous, 15 August 1861.

³¹¹ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

the creation of a Confederate of Daimios whose political status would become equal to that of the Tycoon. Under feudalism, there would be a difference between them, but once feudalism disappeared the Tycoon would not be able to maintain his superiority over them. These factors were important when Satow suggested a Confederation of the Daimios. Having already concluded that the Tycoon could not be the national sovereign and, in the meantime, that the Mikado could not easily be brought out from his spiritual role, either way the British could not establish a well developed diplomatic and commercial relationship. Thus, the Confederate of Daimios would fill the political gap. Satow may also have still been influenced by the actions of the samurais of Choshu who in May 1863 had fired on foreign ships passing through the Shimonoseki strait. He wrote in his memoir that the samurais of Choshu had done this by following an imperial order.³¹² It was clear from that incident, though, that all Japanese would follow the Mikado's direction.

For Satow, if another body could receive the imperial ratification then the British would not have to recognize the Tycoon as the national head. In the meantime, to maintain its dominance, the Tokugawa Shogunate had been excluding the major feudal lords who had expected to join in national politics. This suggested to Satow that the Tycoon had already lost much authority as the ruler of Japan. Satow thus gave up supporting the Tycoon and shifted to the Confederate of Daimios, consisting of the major feudal lords. Then, by applying the traditional concept of the Mikado to that confederation, Satow considered that this might be the ideal structure for

³¹² Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 95.

the future Japan. All would obey the Mikado without hesitation, hence the issue of leadership among the feudal lords would be solved easily. Under Imperial authority, the major feudal lords would be involved in both domestic and international affairs, and in the name of the confederate, the Mikado could ratify their decisions. That process would be much smoother than that of the Tycoon's application for an imperial grant. Under imperial and confederate authority, Japanese politics would be organized better than under the Tokugawa Shogunate.

Satow must have envisaged this when he wrote in 1866:

Between the present time and Jan. 1st, 1868, on which date Hiogo is to be opened, there is ample time for negotiations with the Daimios, for discussing every point hitherto in dispute, for settling what new ports shall be opened and in which Daimios' territories, and for establishing our relations generally on a secure and permanent footing.³¹³

By the London Protocol of 1862, the port of Hyogo was to be opened on 1 January 1868. Considering the present situation, however, Satow must have worried whether the Tycoon's Government could enforce that agreement. That was why, right after the above statement, he wrote:

Unless some arrangement is come to before that date, we fear that we shall not enter on residence at the port without resort to coercion and bloodshed.³¹⁴

³¹³ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

³¹⁴ Ibid.

This statement clearly reflected Satow's apprehension, and in making it he again criticised the Tycoon indirectly. When he used the word *bloodshed*, he might have been resigned to situations in which Japanese would attack the British, or the British would take further actions such as the 1863 bombardment of Kagoshima and that of Shimonoseki in 1864. For him, opening Hyogo as planned represented a serious problem, and on that issue he clearly did not trust the Tycoon. In fact, had Satow trusted the Tycoon's Government he could have presented a revised proposal involving further negotiations—a natural tendency in diplomacy. However, he did not suggest anything. His distrust of the Tycoon's Government was shown by the following statement:

If we would avert such misfortunes; we must treat with the Daimios for they are responsible rulers of the country equally with the Tycoon.³¹⁵

It is easy to understand Satow's thinking. He insisted that the foreigners should make treaties with the feudal lords because they exercised responsible authority. He did not deny the existence of the Tycoon but he recognized him only alongside other feudal lords. This was the point which was judged to be revolutionary by the Japanese.

Meanwhile, among British diplomatic staff, Satow's suggestions were the opposite to those of Parkes. Dickins portrayed the feelings of Parkes as follows:

³¹⁵ Ibid.

Nevertheless, from the Tycoon only could we with any effect or show of legal right, demand the fulfillment of engagements made by his predecessors, and acknowledged by him alone as valid and binding. In the dissolution of his Government and existing relations, we should lose the only solid foundation for the assertion of Treaty rights.³¹⁶

Privately, Parkes might have felt dissatisfied with the Tycoon's Government, but, as British Minister, he was bound by the official view and therefore concluded that only the person who had made the treaty with the British was the one whom the British could recognize as sovereign. In diplomatic terms, Parkes was correct, which was why he considered that anything which might lead to the collapse of the Tycoon's Government should be avoided.³¹⁷

However, six months after Satow's article was carried in the newspaper, Parkes sent the following letter to Flowers, the British consul in Nagasaki:

The Mikado is now the Sovereign without doubt—the Tycoon is one of his principal and most intelligent ministers and advisers.³¹⁸

Whether Parkes realised that Satow was the author of that essay is unclear; in his memoir, Satow wrote that Parkes appeared not to know it.³¹⁹ However, Parkes now clearly began to see the Mikado as the sovereign of Japan and, while maintaining diplomatic relations with the Tycoon,

³¹⁶ Dickins, 32.

³¹⁷ Ibid., 33.

³¹⁸ Ibid., 69.

³¹⁹ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 160.

appeared to recognize step by step who should be Japan's true representative. Satow had taken a truly radical step in being the first to deny the political authority of the Tycoon and when defining the Tycoon as having merely the same status as other major feudal lords. Parkes initially looked nervous at the prospect of the disappearance of the Tycoon's Government, but after considering Satow's perspective, seemed to worry less. Satow had recognized that the existence of the Mikado and a confederate of Daimios would be able to conduct both national politics and international diplomacy. Admittedly, neither in *Eikoku Sakuron* nor in his memoir, although he had criticised the Tycoon and his government, did he promote discussion much about the new political regime to be a replacement. Perhaps he could not foresee one, or feared a situation in which readers of his essays would start radical movements, or where Japan might become anarchic as a result of a complete collapse of responsible government.

So why did Satow criticise the Tycoon's Government as he did? One reason was clear: the Tycoon's Government did not abide by Article XIV. He wrote that:

The Gods themselves cannot fight against the Inevitable and, though somewhat reluctantly, we have no doubt that the TYCOON'S cabinet will yield, with very slight pressure, to the conviction that Art. XIV. of the Treaty with their master cannot longer be treated as a dead letter.³²⁰

³²⁰ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

He may even have feared that the Tycoon's Government would unilaterally renounce the treaty. On 12 February 1861 the American Minister, Townsend Harris, wrote to Alcock, describing Japan as a half civilized state and similar to Europe in the Middle Ages.³²¹ That was a common concept among Europeans about the Japanese, so Satow likely interpreted the Tycoon's failure to follow the articles of the treaty as evidence that the Japanese had no understanding of international law and agreement. But there was also a translated document which Alcock had handed in to the Tycoon's Government which criticised the Government severely for not following the articles of the treaty, and for activities contrary to its terms.³²² The fact that this had been translated into Japanese means that officials of the Tycoon's Government certainly read it. Yet even though Parkes had replaced Alcock as British Minister, the attitude of the Tycoon's Government did not change. All this gave Satow grounds for fearing that his prediction of chaos would become reality.

In the next paragraph of *Eikoku Sakuron* part I, Satow reflected upon what had been done by the foreigners. It concerned events in 1862-63 when Japanese radicals had attacked foreigners by way of expressing their political views. Satow recalled how the foreigners had requested the Tycoon's Government to expel all the Japanese from the foreign concession in Yokohama to preserve security.³²³ From the Europeans, therefore, the

³²¹ *Dai Nihon Kobunsho*, Vol.47 (1999), 22.

³²² Cambridge University Library, Oriental document collection, *Alcock Ronji Heisho*.

³²³ *The Japan Times* (March 16 1866).

Tycoon, who merely existed as *Titular Sovereign of Japan*, assumed that he possessed national sovereignty.³²⁴ It was thus, in part, the attitude of the Europeans which allowed both foreigners and Japanese to misunderstand the social and political status of the Tycoon. Satow now much regretted this, claiming that it was a real mistake to recognize this great Daimio as the national head.³²⁵ He refused to use the word ‘Tycoon’ anymore, which was one way of showing his feeling and indicating that the Shogun had been demoted to the status of being just one feudal lord. He concluded his essay of 16 March as follows:

Therefore we earnestly commend the matter to the
“best consideration”, of the Representatives of the Treaty
powers, convinced that, not only will the measure be of immense
benefit to the country, but that a great stimulus will be also given
to our own rising trade with Japan.³²⁶

Judging from this, Satow was suggesting that when reforming the national administrative system in Japan, a process started by foreigners via diplomatic policy would be much more effective than one started by the Japanese. He was afraid that if it was started by the Japanese, it would become a revolution. In fact, *The Times* of 2 July 1864 reported a debate in the House of Lords on the previous day in which it had been remarked that China had been flourishing until the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842, but after it, China experienced anarchy and serious poverty.³²⁷ Renegotiating the

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ Minamura, 96.

Japanese treaty might therefore be profitable.³²⁸ Aware of this strand of public opinion in Britain, perhaps that was why Satow could not have predicted the civil war, revolution and chaos which subsequently developed.

The Japanese version of Satow's letter was a little different on this point. It omitted the paragraph which expressed the view that other feudal lords possessed the same responsibility as the Tycoon. The paragraph in which Satow admitted that the foreigners themselves had some responsibility for allowing the Tycoon to misunderstand his status was also omitted. The following paragraph, too was left out of the Japanese version:

By the TYCOON and his cabinet, as relieving them
from domestic troubles and jealous, by the Daimios as
opening to them new springs of wealth, by the people of
the country and by the foreign traders for the same reason.³²⁹

So, the Japanese version focused only on Satow's criticism of the Tycoon, and the paragraph which expressed potential benefit for both the Tycoon and the other feudal lords was deleted. It is unclear whether the translator intentionally omitted this or whether Satow, who was involved with composing the Japanese version, was instrumental. Of course, the readership of *The Japan Times* and that of the Japanese version would have had different points of views. In the Japanese version, it was stated that Satow's proposal would facilitate profitable commercial activities between the British and the Japanese.³³⁰ Because Satow had been criticizing the

³²⁸ Ibid., 96.

³²⁹ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

³³⁰ Hagiwara, 233.

Tycoon for controlling international trade and had argued that his proposal would be beneficial for the commercial relationship between Britain and Japan, his idea was taken up by the Japanese as one whereby if they could diminish the status of the Tycoon then everybody could be involved in international trade, and as a result, everybody could benefit. The expression in the Japanese version was vague, thereby increasing its impact on the Japanese because they could understand Satow's proposal according to their own wishes.

In *The Japan Times*, Satow wrote more for the foreigners and about the need to reform Japan's administrative system, but in the Japanese version the emphasis is on the downfall of the Tycoon as beneficial for Japan's future. The Japanese language being complex, simple changes created different meanings and expressions. Satow would have recognized that. Yet however these subtle changes came about, it is easy to understand why many Japanese came to regard his essays as a guide for modernization.

It was always said that Satow published his second essay in April 1866 in *The Japan Times* in order to continue this discussion. That article however, has never been found. Thus, it is impossible to follow his views in detail through *The Japan Times*. However, in the Japanese version, there were several paragraphs which clearly had been translated from English, so these parts must be assumed to be from the article in English which was carried in April.

In volume II, Satow insisted that the current treaties should be annulled and that new treaties, from which all the feudal lords could receive common benefit, should be concluded.³³¹ Satow wrote 45, which was considered as the date April 5.³³² He openly expressed his pleasure that there were several readers who had changed their opinions after reading his previous article.³³³ If true, this would indicate the emergence of several Japanese who both understood Satow's intention and tried to base their actions on his proposal. In fact, from the response, Satow now wrote that his idea could be published freely.³³⁴ He did not, however, indicate what response or what kind of people responded.

The main point was that Satow was indicating the declining authority and dignity of the Tycoon. To illustrate that, he pointed out the historical fact of the 14th Tycoon Tokugawa Iemochi's visit to Kyoto in the spring of 1863. Gubbins stated that the city of Kyoto had not seen the Tycoon for about 250 years;³³⁵ he also described the Tycoon's visit as pathetic.³³⁶ The situation for Tokugawa Iemochi was completely different from that for Tokugawa Iemitsu, who was the third Tycoon. In 1634 the latter visited Kyoto and at that time 300,000 soldiers followed him.³³⁷ By doing this, Iemitsu demonstrated both the political and military power of the Tycoon to the Imperial Court. After Iemitsu, however, no Tokugawa shoguns visited

³³¹ Ibid., 233.

³³² Ibid., 233.

³³³ Ibid., 233.

³³⁴ Ibid., 233.

³³⁵ Gubbins, 144.

³³⁶ Ibid., 144.

³³⁷ Butler, 234.

Kyoto until Iemochi. The reason for that was that by distancing itself from the Imperial Court the Tycoon's Government asserted the political superiority held since the time of Ieyasu. By contrast, Iemochi was now ordered to visit by the Emperor Komei. That was clear evidence that the Tycoon's Government had lost its superiority, which was why Gubbins used the word *pathetic* to describe Iemochi's situation. Gubbins, of course, was an eye-witness of that era. Thus, it would be natural not only that Satow but also intelligent Japanese should reach the same conclusion. Satow mentioned another historical incident: the fight at the Hamaguri gate to the imperial palace in 1864 when soldiers from Choshu had marched to and fired upon the Imperial Court, following the expulsion of Court nobles sympathetic to Choshu. The Tycoon's Government declared war against Choshu in 1865, claiming that it was defending the Imperial Court. Yet although the Tycoon had declared his position and his wish to subjugate Choshu, most feudal lords had not obeyed. Indeed, the government started to think about making a peace settlement. He cited this fact as a major example of the collapse of dignity for the Tycoon.³³⁸ In addition, Satow referred to the Namamugi incident with Richardson in September 1862.³³⁹ By this method he showed how strong his complaint against the Tycoon's Government was.

Satow's criticism of the Tycoon was, however, too severe because it was the Tycoon with whom the British had officially established diplomatic relations. However, in his memoir, he explained his position as follows:

³³⁸ Hagiwara, 234.

³³⁹ Ibid., 234.

I suppose the idea of the foreign diplomatic representatives at that time was to support the Tycoon, whose claim to be considered the sovereign of Japan had already been called in question by Rudolph Lindau in his “Open Letter” of 1862, against the anti-foreign party consisting of the Mikado and *Daimios*, and if necessary to convert him into something more than a mere feudal ruler.³⁴⁰

It was true that the Mikado and his Court nobles had been maintaining an anti-foreign policy and, for Satow, the attitude of foreign diplomats to support the Tycoon’s Government, whose inclination appeared to be more pro-foreign, was understandable. However, knowing Japanese history and cultural values, he suspected that diplomats had not understood the significance of supporting the Tycoon. To support the Tycoon effectively meant to be against the Mikado, which would lead to a situation where all foreigners became the enemy for the Japanese. Of course, the British Legation did not announce anti-Imperial Court sentiment officially, but Satow feared how that attitude might cause the above. Satow reflected:

For we had as yet no idea of the immense potency that lay in the mere name of the sovereign *de jure*, and our studies in Japanese history had not yet enabled us to realize the truth that in the civil wars of Japan the victory had as a rule rested with the party that had managed to obtain possession of the person of Mikado and the regalia.³⁴¹

Without any understanding of international protocol, the Japanese held the existence of the Mikado as their guiding principle. That was crucial from Satow’s point of view, and Parkes did not seem to understand this properly.

³⁴⁰ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 77.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 77.

Although the British declared neutrality regarding Japanese domestic affairs, that attitude would be meaningless if the Japanese came to define the British as a national enemy because they emphasised their diplomatic relationship with the Tycoon. If that happened, it was possible that British residents could no longer stay in Japan, even though their main concern was just international trade. In effect, Satow was warning his own nationals.

Satow concluded volume II by insisting that Japan's unstable political situation was being caused by feudal lords denying the status of the Tycoon's Government.³⁴² 'This matter', was not yet completed, but by 'your' efforts, that would soon be reality. He ended by saying that the British always looked forward to trade freely with the Japanese.³⁴³ Satow did not write more specifically, but Hagiwara pointed out that *this matter* meant the treaties with the feudal lords and *you* meant the foreign representatives.³⁴⁴ As in volume I, Satow again appealed to the foreign Ministers to point out the inadequacy of the present treaties.

Chapter V: Analysis of volume III of *Eikoku Sakuron*

The method of Satow's argument carried by *The Japan Times* on 19 May 1866, recognized as volume III, was totally different from his previous articles. He introduced the argument as follows:

³⁴² Hagiwara, 234.

³⁴³ Ibid., 234.

³⁴⁴ Ibid., 234.

WHILE advocating, lately, the abrogation of the existing Treaty with the Tycoon and the substitution of a more equitable and comprehensive convention with the MIKADO and the Confederated Daimios of Japan, we have hitherto contented ourselves with stating the broader arguments in favour of the measure.³⁴⁵

He now introduced a discussion of the value of making a treaty with the Mikado and the Confederate of Daimios, for both foreigners and Japanese, above that with the Tycoon's Government. In volumes I and II, Satow had consistently pointed out the inadequacy of the treaty with the Tycoon, but although he criticised the Tycoon, he did not compare the Mikado and Tycoon directly. However, in volume III, by writing the following, he changed his method of analysis:

Our intention at present, is to go more into particulars than heretofore, and, taking the provisions of the existing Treaty in detail-to strengthen the position we have thought it right to take up, in opposition to the continuance of the present arrangements, by showing how completely wrong was the TYCOON in taking the first step of signing in a character which did not belong to him-how utterly incapable he has since proved himself to be of carrying out his own engagements-and finally, how generally insufficient are the Treaty and Trade Regulations for commercial as well as international purposes.³⁴⁶

Satow decided to focus on the Tycoon's questionable status, and also the serious problem which had emerged in terms of trade, rather than appealing

³⁴⁵ *The Japan Times* (19 May 1866).

³⁴⁶ *The Japan Times* (19 May 1866).

for a revision of the present treaty. In the meantime, he continued to study Japanese history and customs so that he could understand the relative positions of the Mikado and the Tycoon and thereby gain enough evidence for his criticisms. There were three contentious issues which Satow had already indicated: those were “revision of treaty”, “failure in politics by the Tycoon” and “inadequate conditions and regulations concerning international trade”. He explained that the first two topics had already been discussed,³⁴⁷ so did not include them in volume III.

Satow started by saying that Japanese scholars would blame foreigners if the latter did not appreciate that the title *Tycoon* should be applied only to the Mikado.³⁴⁸ In other words, the title was incorrectly used by the British. *Tycoon* in Japanese meant *the Great Prince*, so it seemed clear that the word must be reserved for the imperial family. Admittedly, the word was commonly used for the Shogun. For example, in the time of Alcock, both he and the British generally had already used *Tycoon* to indicate the Shogun, although, lacking any knowledge of Japanese history, they could not understand the origin of the word. Since the Shogun’s deputy had signed the treaty after diplomatic negotiation, by that fact the British might have thought that the Shogun was the true national sovereign or was a member of the imperial family. Long before, King James I of England had addressed Tokugawa Ieyasu as *To the highe and mightie the emperor of Japan*.³⁴⁹ In

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ Gordon Daniels and Chushichi Tsuzuki (eds.), *The History of Anglo-Japanese Relations 1600-2000, Vol. V, Social and Cultural Perspectives* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 5.

the seventeenth century the British appeared to believe that his bloodline was that of the imperial family.

The British might perhaps be excused this misunderstanding since, given the long history of feudalism in Japan and dominance by Shoguns, the Japanese themselves had forgotten the importance of the Mikado. When even they considered their national hierarchy, nobody could define exactly what status the Mikado should possess-particularly since the Tycoon's Government could control the Mikado and the Imperial Court. Neither British nor Japanese seemed able to explain the true meaning of the word *Tycoon*, and as few Japanese could use English after establishing diplomatic relations with the British, there was no opportunity for discussion about its usage. Gubbins suggested that because the Japanese had no diplomatic relationship with foreigners, the mistaken identity of the Tycoon was commonplace among the Europeans.³⁵⁰

The Japanese had not recognized this as a serious problem until 1867 when they had to face up to its difficulties. In that year, for the purpose of establishing a diplomatic position in Europe, the 15th Tycoon Tokugawa Yoshinobu sent his young brother, Akitake, to Europe as his deputy. Among the Japanese staff was Shibusawa Eiichi. When he interviewed Tokugawa Yoshinobu in 1911, he raised the point that no British Ministers in London used the word *Majesty* for the Tycoon. When asked the reason for this, the British had replied that it was because there was someone whose status was higher than that of the Tycoon, so the Tycoon should be referred to as

³⁵⁰ Gubbins, 138.

Highness.³⁵¹ Thus, according to Shibusawa, for the purpose of compromise, the Japanese used the word *Tycoon* for the first time in their history.³⁵² Shibusawa stated honestly during the interview why the Japanese had compromised so easily. It was because whatever English words were used, everything would mean *Majesty* in Japanese.³⁵³

However, Shibusawa's account is hard to verify because Dickins recalled the following:

The word 'taikun'(Tycoon) is found in the Japanese text of the 1858 Treaty. It is merely descriptive, meaning 'Great Lord', and is not a title or name at all.³⁵⁴

If this were true, then the Japanese had already used the word *Tycoon* in diplomacy before 1858, and had a sense of its meaning. True, the Japanese did not use the word *Tycoon* until the arrival of the foreigners, because it served no function under the Tokugawa Shogunate. Shibusawa must have known that, but possibly chose in 1911 to protect the dignity of the last Tycoon, expressing in the interview the great sense of crisis which he had felt in 1867. He confessed that had the Japanese used the word *Highness*, the Tycoon's Government would have lost standing in Europe, because *highness* would mean that the Tycoon was one rank lower than any head of a European state.³⁵⁵

On that point, Satow wrote critically:

³⁵¹ Shibusawa (ed.), *Sekimukaihikki*, 261.

³⁵² Ibid., 261.

³⁵³ Ibid., 261.

³⁵⁴ Dickins, 64.

³⁵⁵ Shibusawa (ed.), *Sekimukaihikki*, 264.

THE SHOGOON, or SJOGOON, or SIEGOON, as his name is indifferently spelt, has signed a treaty with the representatives of foreign powers under another and more dignified appellation, to which he has no right.³⁵⁶

For Satow, since the Tycoon should not be acknowledged as the head of Japan, any other title should therefore be fine for him. He insisted that nobody should criticise European diplomats for misunderstandings in the past; they should not feel that they had been deceived by the Shogun.³⁵⁷ He exonerated them by the following statement:

It was a matter of total indifference to them (as may be proved by reference to Lord ELGIN's dispatches on the subject) by what title he chose to be called, so long as he really was, as he pretended to be, and as they believed him to be, the real and *bona fide* Sovereign of Japan.³⁵⁸

For Satow, the question was primarily whether the Tycoon was qualified to govern Japan. The title, *Tycoon*, was merely the first step in this wider discussion.

When developing his argument Satow mentioned Lord Elgin and the titles of both sovereigns used in the treaty of 1858. The first part of the 1858 Treaty stated:

HER Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and His Majesty the Tycoon of Japan, being desirous to place the relations between the two

³⁵⁶ *The Japan Times* (19 May 1866).

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

countries on a permanent and friendly footing, and to facilitate commercial intercourse between their respective subjects, and having for that purpose resolved to enter into a Treaty of Peace, Amity and Commerce, have named as their Plenipotentiaries.³⁵⁹

Now, in 1866, Satow wrote as follows:

If TOKUGAWA is Majesty-what is the Mikado? The Mikado, who is always spoken of as the supreme dignitary of the Empire, and the extortion of whose real or pretended sanction to the Treaty made with the SHOGOON is held to be the great diplomatic success of the past year.³⁶⁰

This was the point which Satow was trying to stress most in his essay; it was also the point which the Japanese had never confronted in their history, because no Japanese had ever compared the authority of the Mikado and that of the Tycoon in any detail. This was largely because the Tycoon's Government had hidden the Mikado, as was recognized in minutes kept at the British Legation wherein staff reported to Alcock that the Mikado had no method of communicating outside the Imperial Court.³⁶¹ Longford expressed the astonishment among the citizens of Kyoto when they watched the Emperor Komei take the 14th Tycoon, Tokugawa Iemochi, to the Shrine of Kamo in 1863. Even people in Kyoto had never seen the Mikado.³⁶² Except for this incident, until the foundation of the Meiji Government it was rare that the Mikado left the Imperial Court throughout Japanese history. The

³⁵⁹ FO405/2, Elgin to Malmesbury, 3 September 1858.

³⁶⁰ *The Japan Times* (19 May 1866).

³⁶¹ FO46/16, Miscellaneous, 15 August 1861.

³⁶² Longford, 175.

Mikado was neither criticised nor compared to ordinary people on account of his divinity.

Although the Mikado's spiritual role was clear, his secular status was, of course, less certain. Satow did not provide a clear definition of the Mikado's position in *The Japan Times*; the best description was by Joseph Longford, who defined the Mikado as follows:

At Kioto, there was always the Emperor, the legitimate sovereign the sole legal source of honour and of all authority, sacred as the descendant of the gods in the eyes of all his subjects, but as powerless in fact as he was supreme in name.³⁶³

In contrast to the Mikado, he defined the Tycoon as follows:

At Kamakura firstly, after its fall at Kioto, and later at Yedo, was the Shogun, the vassal of the Emperor but the *de facto* ruler of the Empire, rich and powerful, living in such splendor, dignity and authority that he was believed by Europeans to be the Emperor.³⁶⁴

Longford used the phrase *de facto*, thereby indicating that although the Tycoon was recognized as possessing the same political authority and dignity as the Mikado, it was effective only as long as the Tycoon honoured the Mikado. The Tycoon could never be the national representative by himself, and was himself a courtier of the Mikado, as defined by Longford. However, no Japanese could clearly appreciate that idea in the 1860s. Satow's appeal in *The Japan Times* appeared therefore almost too radical.

³⁶³ Ibid., 32.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., 32.

Continuing his analysis, Satow pointed out that the Tycoon had already been styled *Highness* by the Japanese, so concluded that the Tycoon's status could not be more than that.³⁶⁵ Regarding this, though, one thing must be made clear. The title of *Highness* was used not only for the Tycoon but also for members of the imperial family and for the highest nobility at the Imperial Court. *Highness* was thus applied to people of the highest social classes in Japan. Although Satow indicated the Tycoon's status by using the title *Highness*, that did not mean that the term *Highness* was invented for the Tycoon, nor that the Tycoon had deceived the foreigners by posing as a member of the imperial family when using it. Perhaps Satow merely tried to assert that, by designating him *Highness*, the Tycoon could never be equal to the Mikado.

Meanwhile, Nobutoshi Hagiwara, who has examined the translated version of the 1858 Treaty, has shown proof of deception by the Government. It lay in the titles of both national heads when translated into Japanese. In the Japanese version, Tycoon was translated as *A Tycoon of Japan* and *A Tycoon of the Great Empire of Japan*.³⁶⁶ In the English version, the word *Majesty* was used to express the status of the Tycoon, but in the Japanese version, they did not use the word, *Heika*. What is *Heika*? Satow explained:

Usually translated by "Emperor" in all the Chinese-
English dictionaries, but really meaning "supreme sovereign",
and applicable to both sexes.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁵ *The Japan Times* (19 May 1866).

³⁶⁶ Hagiwara, 238.

³⁶⁷ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 165.

Satow used the phrase *supreme sovereign* to refer to a head of the state. So, had the government wished to define the Tycoon as national sovereign they would have used *Heika* in the Japanese version. However, they did not. The reason was that if *Heika* was used for the Tycoon, all Japanese would be severely critical because *Heika* could apply only to the Mikado. Officials avoided that word in the Japanese version.

Therein lay the problem, both domestically and internationally. For the British, the Tycoon used the word *Majesty*, but for the Japanese, he did not. However, the Tycoon had to engage in this deception, otherwise the Western states would have noticed that there was an authority superior to the Tycoon, in which case, they would have started to negotiate directly with the Mikado and intelligent Japanese would have realised again the legitimacy of the Imperial Court. Consequently, Daimios and samurais would begin to reject the dominance of the Tokugawa Shogunate and place themselves under the direct influence of the Mikado.

In the meantime, the Tycoon's Government also made a false statement regarding Queen Victoria. She was described in the official Japanese documents as *A Queen of Britannia and Ireland*.³⁶⁸ That meant the Japanese documents did not use the word *Heika* for her, thereby trying to put her on the same level as the Tycoon. Had they used *Heika*, she would have been recognized as having the same status as the Mikado. And there was an advantage in using the word *Queen*. For the Japanese, the word *Jyo-o* which means Queen, was historically familiar because, since ancient

³⁶⁸ Hagiwara, 238.

times, the ladies of the imperial family had been addressed in that manner. Therefore, when Japanese in the nineteenth century heard *Queen*, they would have understood that Queen Victoria was a member of the royal family, but not necessarily the national sovereign of Britain. That was what the Tycoon's Government intended. Since the Middle Ages there had been no female Emperors and the Japanese would not have assumed that a woman could be head of state. This vocabulary had implications for domestic affairs, especially in the relationship between the Imperial Court and the Tycoon's Government. It was just a word, but using the word *Heika* or not called into question the reason for the existence of the Tycoon's Government.

For Satow, this was at the root of the ineffective commercial relationship because, when the Tycoon's Government misrepresented the status of both rulers, an important trust had already been broken. He certainly did not intend to discuss the niceties of social status. Rather, he wanted to explain why such matters had to be considered a serious problem. After he had analysed the first part of the Treaty of 1858 he wrote:

Here is evidenced the assumption of sovereign power over the whole of Japan, a mistake carefully avoided afterwards, because, — though the TYCOON of Japan is spoken of throughout the whole treaty — reference to the country is always made by the expression “his territories” or “his dominions” — phrases which, to the Japanese had a meaning widely different to that assigned to them by our diplomatists.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁹ *The Japan Times* (19 May 1866).

Satow thereby pointed out a significant truth: a Tycoon declared himself sovereign of Japan, yet the region which he could govern effectively was expressed merely as *territories* and *dominions*. Specifically, in Article I of the Treaty:

There shall be perpetual peace and friendship between
Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain
and Ireland, her heirs and successors, and His Majesty the Tycoon
of Japan, and between their respective dominions and subjects.³⁷⁰

In Article I, neither *state* nor *country* was mentioned. In English, *dominion* might have been appropriate for a country under a feudal structure of government, however, in the Japanese version, instead of *dominion*, the word, *Shoryo* was used.³⁷¹ This word means that that region was in private possession, as if to show that all regions were under the direct governance of the Tycoon. Also, in Article IV, it was stipulated that British nationals who committed crimes in the Tycoon's region should be tried under British laws, but in that Article, *dominion* was used.³⁷² From the British point of view, the region of the Tycoon was *dominion*, not *Shoryo*.

For Satow, this shrewd method of using Japanese words was ample proof of the Tycoon's deception. Therefore, in 1866, he proposed to revise Article I to the following:

Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great
Britain and Ireland and his *Highness the* SHOGOON being

³⁷⁰ FO405/2, Elgin to Malmesbury, 3 September 1858.

³⁷¹ Hagiwara, 239.

³⁷² FO405/2, Elgin to Malmesbury, 3 September 1858.

desirous of placing the relations between their *respective dominions and territories* on a friendly footing & c.³⁷³

He had been criticising the Tycoon for using the words, territory and dominion because the latter had been asserting the status of *Majesty*, but if the Tycoon used the style *Highness*, then use of territory and dominion could be justified. Satow's analysis was correct because there were many feudal lords in Japan, and the Tycoon's Government did not govern their regions directly.

Brinkley, as indicated earlier, noted the existence of *Han-satsu* since 1661, which means paper currency in each feudal region.³⁷⁴ Admittedly, the Tycoon's Government issued official gold and silver coins, but at the same time it permitted each feudal lord to issue paper currency effective only in his region. The Government thereby implicitly acknowledged their independence because these paper currencies were symbols of their fiefs. Satow clearly shared this view, believing the Tycoon to be simply the representative of all the Japanese feudal lords. When he defined himself as sovereign of Japan, the Tycoon deceived not only the British but also the Japanese about the nation's governance, as indicated by the following statement:

Thus the words of the Treaty would have corresponded to what is actually the fact:—that we have a treaty with the master of Yedo and the eight provinces round it and with a few outlying spots scattered through the islands of DAI

³⁷³ *The Japan Times* (19 May 1866).

³⁷⁴ Brinkley, 639.

NIPPON-but with SENDAI, CHIOSHU, SATSUMA and the other great Daimios, we can claim no more than what they may choose to consider the general duties of man to man may require.³⁷⁵

In the Japanese version of *Eikoku Sakuron*, this paragraph was translated more bluntly. It became: although the Tycoon was the ruler of Edo, eight provinces of Kanto and the other cities, but I was not sure how he would explain his status to the feudal lords of Sendai and Satsuma who claimed themselves to be major feudal lords.³⁷⁶ Judging from this passage alone, it could be surmised that he denied the Tycoon not only status as national head of state but also any superiority to other feudal lords. *Eikoku Sakuron* was perhaps translated in this way to express criticism of the Tycoon indirectly.

Yet even if Satow already had a vision for a future political system for Japan, so far, neither the Japanese nor the foreigners had accepted the need for it. Alcock, for instance, had seemed to believe that if Westerners gave more time, the Japanese would correct everything effectively by themselves. Alcock was said to have made the London Protocol of 1862 based on that assumption,³⁷⁷ and this might well have been a common idea even among those foreigners who believed that without changing the national system of governance the Japanese could never achieve modernization. However, Satow did not think this. For him, Japan's backwardness was caused not because it had been a closed state for about 250 years but by the deception

³⁷⁵ *The Japan Times* (19 May 1866).

³⁷⁶ Hagiwara, 240.

³⁷⁷ Mayuko Sano, *Alcock no Edo—Shodai Eikoku Koushi ga Mita Bakumatsu Nihon* (Tokyo: Chuo Kouron Shinsha, 2003), 238.

over the Tycoon's status. That was the origin of all current difficulties, as he described when writing:

This is absolutely our position at present-one of great difficulty and from which we see no means of extrication but that which we suggest-the additional complication of the question when OSAKA is opened and we find ourselves in the immediate neighbourhood of the MIKADO and several powerful chiefs, all busily intriguing against the Yedo usurper-we leave our readers to imagine.³⁷⁸

The final phrase, *we leave our readers to imagine*, reflected his fundamental fears. He argued that the current Japanese situation could be resolved only if both the foreigners and the Japanese shared a common ideal – the Confederate Daimios. That was why, in his essay, he used the word, *usurper* for the Tycoon. That word insulted the Tycoon, but, for Satow, the Tycoon had already lost legitimacy as the national sovereign, so he had no hesitation in using it.

Satow also mentioned Article III of the 1858 Treaty which provided for the opening of ports and their regulations, although he did not discuss this in depth. He was more concerned about Articles IV and V. The main issue of Article IV was the legal status of British nationals in Japan; however, since Satow did not accept the Tycoon as national sovereign, he insisted on the following hypothesis:

This is very good as far as the “dominions” of his “Majesty” the SHOGOON are concerned, but it does not preclude nor would it in

³⁷⁸ *The Japan Times* (19 May 1866).

the least degree prevent the Prince of OWARI³⁷⁹ from decapitating any British subject who ventured to land in his “dominions” nor him of HIZEN³⁸⁰ from putting to death with agonizing torture any unfortunates shipwrecked on his coasts, whose skulls he might wish to place in his museum of European curiosities.³⁸¹

After that, he referred to Article V, which stipulated that Japanese who committed crimes against the British should be subjected to Japanese laws. His view was:

The first clause of this has been occasionally put in force, when the offender has happened to live under the jurisdiction of the Yedo officials, but it is a dead letter as regards the retainers of other Daimios-as has been proved in the cases of SATSUMA and CHOSHIU.³⁸²

By referring to these two Articles, Satow pointed out a serious contradiction: a British criminal in Japan would be protected by the Article if in the Tycoon’s region, but, if in a feudal lord’s region, that person would not be protected by the Article. This was correct. The British had made the 1858 Treaty with the Tycoon, not with other feudal lords. Therefore, if the British Legation expected to protect its citizens in Japan, Britain would have to make treaties with all the other feudal lords. However, in reality, this would be impossible. As a result, Articles IV and V applied only in the Tycoon’s region because it was apparent that the Edo Government could do nothing against Satsuma and Choshu. Had the Tycoon been the national sovereign in

³⁷⁹ Principal house of *Go-Sanke* under the Tokugawa Shogunate.

³⁸⁰ One advanced fief, later forming the Meiji Government after the Restoration.

³⁸¹ *The Japan Times* (19 May 1866).

³⁸² Ibid.

Japan, then the bombardments of Kagoshima in August 1863 and Shimonoseki in September 1864 could never have occurred. Those incidents were taken to be proof of the Tycoon's status, which was why Satow emphasised Article V in his discussion.

After this, Satow mentioned Articles XI to XIII, but in few words, suggesting that these Articles were not important for his argument. Then he came to Article XIV, which he had already been stressing via *The Japan Times*. He wrote about Article XIV:

At these open ports, British subjects may freely import and export goods and trade freely with “all classes of Japanese “, and without the “intervention of any Japanese authorities in such purchase or sale, or in making or receiving payments for same”. This is the most important commercial article in the Treaty.³⁸³

Satow thereby emphasised that neither British nor Japanese should be disturbed in their commercial activities by officials. However, in reality, what happened?

From the opening of the ports it has been consistently violated. Scores of well-authenticated cases can be quoted of its infraction; our trade with Japan is crippled by its being a dead letter, our social intercourse with the people checked, and all advance towards amity rendered impossible.³⁸⁴

This paragraph was the one he wished to emphasise most because if the Tycoon was admitted to be head of state, then Article XIV could not be

³⁸³ *The Japan Times* (19 May 1866).

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

effective. *The Times* of 19 August 1864 reported the total amount of trade in 1863. Total exports from Japan to Britain were worth £ 2,149,000 while imports totalled £ 635,000.³⁸⁵ These figures certainly indicated commercial activity, but for Satow it was not enough and he considered that if all Japanese could engage in international trade then the figures would be higher. He predicted the potential for trade between Britain and Japan. Indeed, by 1867 total exportation to Britain had risen to £ 3,030,000 while imports from Britain were worth £ 4,620,000.³⁸⁶ One factor in this improvement was the 1866 Tariff Convention, Articles IX and X of which confirmed that all Japanese could participate in international trade.³⁸⁷ With this increase in trade, Satow might have thought that his opinion was vindicated. However, from the Japanese point of view, the Tariff Convention of 1866 became a major problem because, after it, feudalism, which had been declining slowly, now started to move decisively towards its final collapse.³⁸⁸ In fact, in the following year, the Tycoon's Government collapsed largely because its governance system could not bear the strain of international trade.

Did Satow insist that his ideas were based on this truth about the 1858 Treaty? He wrote about it as follows;

The non-observance of this article is one of the strongest points the Ministers have for demanding a new Treaty, and until reform in this particular is obtained, neither our own

³⁸⁵ Minamura, 142.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 142.

³⁸⁷ FO881/1474, Parkes to Clarendon, 16 July 1866.

³⁸⁸ Minamura, 142.

trade, nor the resources of this empire can ever be developed.³⁸⁹

In *The Japan Times* he stressed this argument, but in the Japanese version of *Eikoku Sakuron* this paragraph was the final one. In the latter, he described how all the foreign Ministers considered that the present treaties should be abolished and that new treaties should be made urgently, otherwise commercial activities could not flourish and the Japanese themselves could receive no benefit.³⁹⁰ It was necessary to break the present deadlock. Yet in *The Japan Times*, although he had raised questions about the Japanese system, he did not insist on breaking with the present. Only in the Japanese version did he insist that all the Ministers were expecting an alternative. Satow may have ended with that paragraph intentionally in the Japanese version, thereby changing the thrust of his opinion indirectly. By so doing, the Japanese had the impression that he was on the anti-Tycoon's Government side. Consequently, the Japanese concluded that the British were on the side of the Imperial Court after the Meiji Restoration. Whatever Satow's intention, readers of the Japanese version must have formed a different view point from those of *The Japan Times*.

After mentioning, in passing, Articles XVI to XXIII of the 1858 Treaty, Satow ended with the following statement:

But our subject is exhausted. In the series of articles published in these columns on the question, we have we maintain-fully and conclusively proved that the SHOGOON has deceived the representatives of the Western Powers and

³⁸⁹ *The Japan Times* (19 May 1866).

³⁹⁰ Hagiwara, 242.

fraudulently concluded Treaties, many of whose provisions he is unable to carry out—that other clauses, which he can observe if he will, he persistently violates—that the continuance of the existing arrangements are likely to lead to political crisis in Japan and the great disturbance of our trade and that this trade can never, under present regulations, acquire the importance and value which is its due. We leave the question now in the hands of those who have the power of bringing it to a solution; in the earnest hope that at no distant date we may see the present Treaty abrogated, in favour of a more comprehensive and satisfactory one—a fair and equitable Convention with the MIKADO and the Confederate Daimios—the real ruler of Japan.³⁹¹

Herschel Webb, who studied the Imperial Court under the Tokugawa Shogunate, stated that although the Mikado was expected to govern, that did not mean that the Mikado would govern by controlling the government.³⁹² He pointed out an important Japanese national idea. This was that the Japanese expected the Mikado to be the national sovereign of Japan, while at the same time the Mikado would govern directly as a representative of the government.

In the Japanese version, Satow ends his argument by appealing to the Japanese, but in *The Japan Times* he ends his argument by addressing *those who have the power of bringing it to a solution*. Who did he mean? Nobutoshi Hagiwara pointed out that it could be Parkes.³⁹³ Why him? Considering international affairs in 1866, the Americans could not maintain any effective diplomatic relationship because of their civil war. The Russians had been

³⁹¹ *The Japan Times* (19 May 1866).

³⁹² Herschel Webb, *The Japanese Imperial Institution in the Tokugawa Period* (Columbia University Press, 1968), 60.

³⁹³ Hagiwara, 244.

focusing only on Hakodate for trading with the Japanese, not on all ports in Japan, and had no interest in opening other ports and cities. That applied also to the Dutch who focused only on Nagasaki. There were other Western states with which the Tycoon's Government had established diplomatic relations, for example, Prussia, Switzerland and Italy, but they did not have enough naval power to influence Japanese diplomacy. Thus, the British and French were the major Western states which could be influential with the Japanese, and, when comparing naval power, the British were overwhelmingly superior. If the British took an initiative all the other Westerners would follow. Satow knew this, which was why he appealed to Parkes via *The Japan Times*.

It cannot be proved that Parkes read Satow's essays. Parkes did not mention them and, since Satow wrote anonymously, Parkes could not have known everything about them in detail. However, five months after *Eikoku Sakuron* had been published, Parkes sent his letter to Marcus Flowers on 14 October 1866 which admitted the Mikado as the sovereign of Japan. Parkes thereby obviously shared the same idea as Satow, which was why Shibusawa Eiichi testified that although the French Minister, Leon Roches (1809-1900), called the Tycoon 'Majesty', Parkes addressed him as 'Highness'.³⁹⁴ It cannot be proved that his changed attitude was due to Satow; nevertheless, Parkes could now analyse Japanese domestic affairs more accurately. On 29 April

³⁹⁴ Shibusawa (ed.), *Sekimukaihikki*, 263.

1867, therefore, when he met 15th Tycoon, Tokugawa Yoshinobu, at Osaka castle, he officially addressed him as Highness.³⁹⁵

Chapters four and five have examined in considerable detail Satow's thinking, as published in *Eikoku Sakuron*. Satow was determined to unravel the confusing relationship between the Mikado and the Shogun, both historically and as it remained in 1866, to assess how their respective roles were perceived by the Japanese, and to explain how the tensions inherent in what appeared to Westerners to be a dual power system impacted upon the ability of foreigners to enter into effective diplomatic and commercial agreements. Critical as Satow was of the pretensions and growing ineffectiveness of the Tycoon's Government, he nevertheless understood that constitutional change could and should only come about within the framework of existing political and social structures; hence the need to incorporate the feudal daimyos and the wider samurai class into any settlement and, in all probability, to find a place for the Tokugawa family in any new Japan. To the extent that his ideas would assist the opening of Japan to greater Western contact and commercial opportunity they had an obvious appeal among the foreign trading and diplomatic communities. But his ideas also resonated with some Japanese, particularly with those who recognised that the nation's isolation and technological deficiencies had made it vulnerable in international affairs and also with those who soon realised that Satow's writings could be interpreted selectively to suit their own domestic political ambitions. Satow may well have influenced the

³⁹⁵ Fox, 200.

attitude of Harry Parkes, leading the British Minister to acknowledge in correspondence in 1866 that the Mikado was the true sovereign of Japan. Thereafter, Parkes formally rejected any notion that Japanese sovereignty lay with the Shogun when addressing the latter at Osaka castle in 1867. This careful analysis of *Eikoku Sakuron* being now completed, the next chapter will attempt to place Satow's ideas in context and to confront the question whether, despite the credit which he has since received for them, the ideas which he put forward were truly his own.

Chapter VI: *Eikoku Sakuron*: A counter argument

Before discussing further aspects of *Eikoku Sakuron* one important issue must be clarified; the different acknowledgements between the British and Japanese concerning *Eikoku Sakuron*. On the Japanese side, although there was no title and it was written in anonymity, the essays carried in *The*

Japan Times were identified as writings by Satow. As proof, there was the Japanese version where his name was mentioned clearly. Perhaps the person who translated the essays added Satow's name. In Satow's memoir, regarding the Japanese version of *Eikoku Sakuron*, he admitted that it was his work. He wrote it for the purpose of handing it to the feudal lord of Awa; he produced the pamphlet by receiving the assistance of a retainer.³⁹⁶ However, reviewing his confession in detail, one thing is clear: he denied any involvement in the public distribution of his pamphlet.³⁹⁷ He admitted only the fact of the translation for a feudal lord, so it cannot be certain whether his pamphlet, as distributed in public, had the same content as the original. The common view about *Eikoku Sakuron* was entirely based on the Japanese version, and it is possible that the Japanese translator changed the meaning in a way which Satow had not intended. It is certain that the Japanese version of *Eikoku Sakuron* did not translate everything which was written in *The Japan Times*. The readers can follow every sentence of *Eikoku Sakuron* in *The Japan Times*, but they cannot follow those of *The Japan Times* in the Japanese version of *Eikoku Sakuron*. Japanese sources do not explain this difference.

Furthermore, the documents which prove the articles in *The Japan Times* to be Satow's work are only Japanese documents, and even these are only secondary sources. No eye-witness of the Meiji Restoration mentioned it. The Japanese themselves therefore cannot be sure of the truth because their proofs are not primary sources. As for the British, they followed the

³⁹⁶ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 159.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 160.

established Japanese position, not investigating it themselves, so there are several misunderstandings. For example, Grace Fox misunderstood this when writing about *Eikoku Sakuron* and insisted that after the three volumes of essays had been completed they were translated into Japanese and then handed to the feudal lord of Awa. After that, Satow's pamphlet was distributed in public.³⁹⁸ If the British had researched the sequence of events that simple misunderstanding would not have happened. The Japanese themselves cannot be certain about the truth. In fact, there is no means to prove that the author of the articles in *The Japan Times* was Satow.

In which case, why have the Japanese always maintained their attitude? One thing might be considered. It is that one hero of the Meiji Restoration, Saigo Takamori, sent a letter to another, Ohkubo Toshimichi, and, based on his letter, the latter concluded that Satow must be the author of the essays in *The Japan Times* through *ex post facto* reasoning. The letter read:

In the first place the English idea was that the sovereign of Japan should wield the governing power, and under him the *daimios* should be placed, and so the establishment of the constitution (or national policy) would be similar to the system of all other countries.³⁹⁹

The context is not clear because it is just one paragraph in the letter, but the person whom Saigo described as *Him* was considered to be the Mikado. That means that the future Japanese political structure which Saigo described

³⁹⁸ Fox, 179-180.

³⁹⁹ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 254.

was the same as Satow had discussed in the Japanese version of *Eikoku Sakuron*. Also, the content of the Japanese version was similar to the articles in *The Japan Times*. By this series of conjectures, Satow was defined as the author.

Satow explained British diplomatic policy in his memoir as follows:

The British Legation, on the contrary, were determined that so far as their influence went, the Mikado should be restored to the head of the nation, so that our treaties might receive a sanction that no one would venture to dispute, and for this purpose it was necessary that the constitution of the Tycoon's government should be modified in such a manner as to admit the principal *daimios* (or clans rather) to a share in the distribution of power.⁴⁰⁰

This passage might have been taken as further proof, because he states that the British Legation had acknowledged the Mikado as national sovereign, and he emphasised the need to reform the Tycoon's Government. This was what he had written in *The Japan Times*. His 1921 memoir was published about 60 years after the Meiji Restoration. During the period of the Meiji Restoration, the British Legation, of course, declared neutrality in Japanese domestic affairs, although, after 60 years, judging from this paragraph, the Japanese may have concluded that they relied on British diplomacy at that time. Based on that assumption, they became convinced that Satow was the author of the essays in *The Japan Times*. In the absence of specific evidence

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., 244.

to the contrary, Satow must be assumed to be the author of both *Eikoku Sakuron* and the articles in *The Japan Times*.

For the British, Satow's essays were important because he broke with the existing diplomatic concept for maintaining the relationship with Japan by now suggesting that the Mikado should head a new political regime. Furthermore, in *Eikoku Sakuron* Satow questioned the value of treaties made with the Tycoon because it had been assumed that he governed all regions of Japan, whereas in reality his direct governance was limited. That meant that there were regions where the Articles could not be effective.

The above are the two major insights which Satow offered. However, there is one large question: whether those were really his original ideas. In his memoir, he admitted that because he had complained about the political attitude of the Tycoon's Government, he wrote the pamphlet which advocated reform of the governance system.⁴⁰¹ Thus, if his claim is accepted, those would be his original ideas. But there are several facts which question this. The first is that, as Satow mentioned, a Swiss consul Rudolph Lindau had already written a piece entitled *Open Letter* in 1862 in which he had questioned the role of the Tycoon as the national head of Japan. This, of course, was four years before the publication of *Eikoku Sakuron*. Also in 1862, James Hope, vice-admiral in the Royal Navy, sent the following report to the Admiralty:

In regards to the Mikado, I may further observe that a

⁴⁰¹ Ibid, 159.

well-written pamphlet has recently been published in Japan, in which the views advocated that the Tycoon's Government had in reality, no power to make Treaties with foreigners without the sanction of Mikado, never having been obtained, the Treaties with foreigners are not valid, or at any rate, only so in the Tycoon's special territories.⁴⁰²

There are several curious points in his paragraph. Hope suggested that the Tycoon could not make a treaty with foreign states without imperial ratification. Furthermore, he observed that any treaty with the Tycoon would be effective only in the Tycoon's regions. These two points are also the major issues for Satow. Is this similarity merely a coincidence? One other thing is clear: according to Hope, he conveyed those ideas only after he had read a well-written pamphlet. That means that at the foreign settlement in Yokohama those ideas had already spread among the Westerners. The existence of this pamphlet can be taken as proof that many foreigners shared the same idea.⁴⁰³ Thus, *Eikoku Sakuron* can be re-defined as essays which built upon existing ideas by applying logical thinking. Hope's report was written one month before Satow's arrival in Japan. Considering this, it is hard to conclude that *Eikoku Sakuron* was an original work.

For the purpose of strengthening this hypothesis, there is further proof: a letter which Russell sent to Parkes in August 1865. In it, he wrote:

When Lord Elgin went to Japan he found the Tycoon

⁴⁰² FO410/5, Hope to the Admiralty, 28 August 1862.

⁴⁰³ According to Takashi Ishii, the title of this pamphlet was *Open Letter for the Western Representatives in Edo*. It was published by the Japan Herald in Yokohama in July 1862. It was written anonymously, although Ishii presumed it was written by an American. (Takashi Ishii, *Meiji Ishin to Jiyu Minken* (Yokohama: Yurindo, 1994), 21).

the *de facto* sovereign of the country, to whom obedience was generally yielded, and who appears to possess the power, as representing the Japanese nation, to enter into Treaties with foreign states.⁴⁰⁴

When Elgin made the commercial treaty in 1858, he might have recognised that the Tycoon was not the true sovereign of Japan. Russell continued:

It was discovered that there was a still higher power than that of the Tycoon, that the authority wielded by that prince was delegated to him by a spiritual Emperor, called the Mikado, and that there were great feudal lords who superior to the Tycoon in rank, only obeyed him when he had the means of enforcing obedience.⁴⁰⁵

Russell misunderstood the existence of feudal lords whose political power was greater than that of the Tycoon. There were several nobles who were higher in social status than the Tycoon, but they did not have any political authority.

However, the British analysis of Japanese domestic governance since the 1858 Treaty was accurate. In 1858 the British had no confirmation of the Mikado's superiority, but at least they recognized the existence of an authority superior to the Tycoon. Russell must have recognized this when

⁴⁰⁴ FO881/1400, Russell to Parkes, 23 August 1865.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid. In the same document, Russell conveyed his analysis of Japanese sovereignty to Parkes: it was after the bombardments of Kagoshima and Shimonoseki that he began to doubt the Tycoon's Government. As a result, Russell questioned whether the Tycoon could still be defined as the national sovereign of Japan. Nevertheless, Russell informed Parkes that the British Government would maintain its treaties with the Tycoon's Government. (FO262/88, Russell to Parkes, 23 August 1865).

the Japanese were stressing the importance of imperial ratification.⁴⁰⁶ Also, a letter by Colonel Neale on 29 January 1863 reported the serious situation caused by the Mikado's political pressure on the Tycoon.⁴⁰⁷ Obviously the British could not ignore the existence of the Mikado. They must have begun to recognize that all Japanese shared the same vision of the Mikado. The letters of Hope and Russell in 1862 and 1865 prove that the British had already started to analyse Japanese identity and held ideas similar to those which Satow later developed. Satow arrived in Japan when such ideas had already circulated within the foreign settlement. Yet in *The Japan Times*, it was not mentioned that these ideas already existed among the foreigners, which was probably why the Japanese thought that Satow's essays were original. Japanese in the nineteenth century were not acquainted with English, and Satow was effectively their only point of contact.

A second interesting point was that on 20 March 1866, at almost the same time as Volume I of *Eikoku Sakuron* appeared in *The Japan Times*, a surprising proposal was made by the Japanese. In Satsuma's mission to Britain in 1866 was a samurai, Matsuki Kouan, who after the foundation of the Meiji Government changed his name to Terashima Munenori (1832-1893) and became the minister of foreign affairs. When in London, Matsuki visited Lord Clarendon, the Foreign Secretary, with a proposal the content of which was almost the same as Satow had written in *The Japan Times*. His main point was that Satsuma had been opposing the dominance

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ FO410/7, Neale to Russell, 29 January 1863.

of international trade by the Tycoon's Government.⁴⁰⁸ After explaining the position of Satsuma, he proposed the following:

1. The foreign states which had made a treaty with the Japanese should request the Mikado to hold an assembly of major feudal lords.
2. The major feudal lords should gather in Kyoto, and then they should sign a new treaty which had been ratified by the Mikado. Then samurais authorized by their feudal lords should move to Osaka and exchange the instrument of ratification with all the foreign ministers.⁴⁰⁹

Matsuki's two suggestions meant that he tried to transfer the right of signing from the Tycoon to a confederation of Daimios under imperial authority.⁴¹⁰ The statement was revolutionary because to deprive the Tycoon of the right of signing meant that he lost supremacy in Japan by losing his official position. It had already been noted in diplomatic circles that even if the Tycoon signed a new treaty, without imperial ratification he could not enforce it. Therefore, the right of signing should be taken from him, in which case he could not assert himself as the official Japanese representative in either domestic or international affairs. By proposing the above, Matsuki was attempting a rapid change to the regime.⁴¹¹

It would have been impossible for Satow and Matsuki to arrange in advance a simultaneous announcement. It could be a coincidence, but that

⁴⁰⁸ Ishii, *Meiji Ishin to Gaiatsu*, 199.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid., 199.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid., 199.

⁴¹¹ Ibid., 199.

would be surprising. In reality, Matsuki provides another proof that *Eikoku Sakuron* was not Satow's original idea because, before the articles were translated into Japanese and spread among them, there were Japanese who already held the same views as Satow.

What were the similarities between their ideas? First, in the last part of Volume III, Satow insisted that the Mikado and Confederate Daimios should rule Japan.⁴¹² That was also what Matsuki suggested to Clarendon. Then, when should it be done? Matsuki predicted there would be civil war when the port of Hyogo was opened without reforming the treaty.⁴¹³ Satow likewise wrote in Volume I *Between the present time and Jan. 1^{st.}, 1868 on which date Hiogo is to be opened*, and then worried, if there was no arrangement, in the foreign settlement there would be *coercion and bloodshed*.⁴¹⁴ Both therefore mentioned the deadline for treaty revision as the date for opening the port of Hyogo, stipulated in the London Protocol of 1862 as 1 January 1868. In fact, in November 1865, before Matsuki's proposal and *Eikoku Sakuron*, the British, French and Dutch fleets had already gathered off Hyogo as Parkes had directed and requested imperial ratification for the 1858 Treaty and the opening of Hyogo even earlier than agreed. Both Satow and Matsuki had focused on Hyogo and considered that the opening of Hyogo would be the turning point for the Tokugawa Shogunate.

⁴¹² *The Japan Times* (19 May 1866).

⁴¹³ Ishii, *Meiji Ishin to Gaiatsu*, 204.

⁴¹⁴ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

There is another similarity regarding the eligibility of feudal lords to join the confederate under the Mikado. Matsuki specified that it should be *Go-sanke* and the other major feudal lords.⁴¹⁵ Satow did not say this directly, but he wrote, *We must treat with the Daimios, for they are responsible rulers of the country of Japan.*⁴¹⁶ Therefore, he likely had the major feudal lords in mind. He wrote *Confederate Daimios*, and this phrase suggests that not all the feudal lords could join and that eligibility would be limited. Again, they appeared to share the same idea.

Was there any difference between them? There was one clear difference. Matsuki insisted that the Western states which had made treaties with the Tycoon should propose those ideas to the Mikado.⁴¹⁷ This attitude was apparent in other situations: as already mentioned, in the conference between Parkes and Saigo in June 1866,⁴¹⁸ and also in the meeting between Mitford and Komatsu in February 1867,⁴¹⁹ Satsuma samurais requested the British to make the first move. Therefore, it can be assumed that in Satsuma the samurais considered that nothing would arise from their own efforts. However, the British could be influential among both the Westerners and the Japanese, so it would be effective if they moved first. This being the common assumption in Satsuma, it was only natural that Matsuki should ask the British to act. By contrast, because of the neutral stance adopted by the British Legation, Satow wrote rather vaguely in *The*

⁴¹⁵ Ishii, *Meiji Ishin to Gaiatsu*, 204.

⁴¹⁶ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

⁴¹⁷ Ishii, *Meiji Ishin to Gaiatsu*, 204.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 103.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 107.

Japan Times that *We leave the question now in the hands of those who have the power of bringing it to a solution.*⁴²⁰

How could Satow and Matsuki have shared similar ideas and with roughly the same approach? Satow was fluent in Japanese, and Matsuki, as one member of the mission which represented Satsuma, must have been an intellectual samurai. Thus, there is the possibility of contact before 1866. However, Matsuki did not leave any memoir and Satow did not mention him in his memoir, so it would be hard to prove a relationship. Even so, according to Takashi Ishii, who pointed out these similarities between Satow and Matsuki, there had to be a common nucleus from which each could develop his thoughts. He suggested that it could be the memorandum by Alcock on 22 September 1864,⁴²¹ which read as follows:

The Tycoon may be regarded as the Treaty-making power, and theoretically be held responsible for their execution. But a long and sad experience has sufficiently shown that while this conflict of authority is going on with the Mikado, they will remain inoperative in a great degree; and the responsibility, if insisted upon, could only lead to war, both civil and foreign.⁴²²

Alcock was blunt because in 1864 he had already judged the Tycoon's governance to be inoperative. To illustrate his point, he stressed the existence of the Mikado. From his point of view it was clear who should be superior in Japan, and, worse, if the present situation continued there was the possibility of war. At the time of his memorandum, by cooperating with

⁴²⁰ *The Japan Times* (19 May 1866).

⁴²¹ Ishii, *Meiji Ishin to Gaiatsu*, 205.

⁴²² FO881/1342, Memorandum by Alcock, 22 September 1864.

the French, Dutch and American fleets, the British navy was bombarding Choshu which had fired against foreign ships passing the Shimonoseki strait in 1863. Therefore, his fear of full-scale war against the Japanese was realistic.

In the meantime, this action undertaken by Choshu in 1863 involved a serious problem: Choshu had followed the Mikado's order, not the Tycoon's. It had happened after the Imperial Court gave an official notice to the Tycoon's Government whereby a conflict with the foreigners was officially acknowledged. The British had already recognized this.⁴²³ Whatever the exact procedure was, it was clear that the Tycoon had followed the Mikado. Thus, for Alcock, it was obvious who was superior. The Tycoon's Government had been maintaining a diplomatic relationship with the Western states, but, by an imperial order, they indirectly broke those relations. Clearly the Tycoon's Government could not be eligible to conduct Japan's diplomacy.

Yet, if the Tycoon and his Government were inappropriate for national governance, what organization could be the replacement? Alcock wrote:

It was probable that to effect such large and comprehensive modifications in the relations at present existing between the Japanese and foreign nations, and their respective Governments, the assembling of a great Council of Daimios would be essential.⁴²⁴

Alcock clearly urged the assembly of Daimios. Like Satow in *Eikoku Sakuron*, Alcock also must have realised that the Tycoon could not control all

⁴²³ FO881/1342, Translation of Mikado's and Tycoon's Orders for the Expulsion of Foreigners.

⁴²⁴ FO881/1342, Memorandum by Alcock, 22 September 1864.

Japan. The apparent proofs of that were the bombardment of Kagoshima in 1863 and that of Shimonoseki in 1864, because the Tycoon's Government could not control their feudal lords and the foreign military had to enact punishment. This meant that the Tycoon's Government had lost credibility to control domestic affairs. Judging from all this, Alcock obviously concluded that it should not be the Tycoon's Government but the Council of Daimios which should govern Japan.

What was the perceived advantage of such a governance system? Alcock defined it as follows:

If it were possible under fear of impending dangers and calamities, to bring Mikado, Tycoon, and Daimios, in better accord on matters touching their material interests, and lead them all to accept as a *fait accompli* and a necessity, Treaties and foreign relations-the modifications of the terms of these to meet some of their objections could offer no serious difficulty.⁴²⁵

By recognizing the existence of the Mikado, Tycoon and the Daimios, Alcock gave this example for constructing a new regime under the Mikado. In one way, his suggestion was reasonable. The Mikado had strong psychological authority for all Japanese, albeit no secular power. The Tycoon meanwhile had secular power and authority, but no spiritual identity. The Daimios could live only under the Tokugawa Shogunate. These facts meant all three of them had disadvantages with respect to each other, but their advantages if together, outweighed all the disadvantages. Considering these three entities, Alcock must have settled for the Confederate Daimios under the

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

Mikado. He acknowledged the existence of the Tycoon, so that the latter might feel that he also could join that confederation, otherwise a new Japanese regime might cancel the treaties with the West on the abolition of the Tycoon's Government. That situation was what Alcock most feared.

At this point in his memorandum, Alcock did not persist in discussing a new regime because he believed that the situation would only come about amid danger and calamity. In other words, except for a diplomatic failure or a disaster, no new regime would be founded. However, that did not mean that Alcock was content with the present situation. He warned:

Failure in this direction means civil war, collision and contests with foreign Powers and at no distant period such complications as must lead to a general war for the maintenance of Treaties, altogether illusory and inoperative at present in their main provisions.⁴²⁶

He discussed the possibility both of civil war and war against Western states, which was understandable because Satsuma and Choshu had already acted independently by ignoring the existence of the Tycoon's Government. At the same time, the Tycoon's Government had also lost the trust of the Western states. Therefore, Alcock must have anticipated that if this situation continued the Japanese administration would soon collapse. Such contradictory apprehensions, whereby he was afraid of changing the present structure but also anticipated the uncertainty of founding any new regime,

⁴²⁶ Ibid.

must have been distressing when considering future diplomacy with the Japanese.

Alcock claimed that the reason why he concerned himself over any new regime in Japan was because he had noticed one essential thing: concluding the treaty with the Tycoon did not mean he had concluded a treaty with the state of Japan.⁴²⁷ As a senior diplomat who had been facing various problems since the opening of ports for commerce, he must have realised why the Tycoon's Government could not maintain satisfactory diplomatic relations. In fact, three years before this memorandum, Alcock had raised doubts about the Tycoon's Government in a letter to Russell:

With the danger the Tycoons, ever since the first appearance of foreigners to talk of Treaties under Commodore Perry in 1852-53, seem to have been harassed.⁴²⁸

Alcock had already understood the truth. The only reason why the Tycoon was able to govern all of Japan was because Japan had been a closed society for so long. Tensions and contradictions soon emerged within the Tokugawa Shogunate after the arrival of the Westerners. Alcock had added in his 1861 letter that the existence of the Mikado was not a myth.⁴²⁹ Alcock was thereby perhaps the first to imagine Japan's future political structure.

Alcock's memorandum was said by Ishii to have been modified by Satow and Matsuki when they made their suggestions in 1866.⁴³⁰ Ishii did

⁴²⁷ Sano, 164.

⁴²⁸ FO881/1009, Alcock to Russell, 16 August 1861.

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

⁴³⁰ Ishii, *Meiji Ishin to Gaiatsu*, 205.

not explain, however, how both of them had access to Alcock's memorandum. Satow had possible access, since Alcock was his superior at the Legation. But Matsuki was neither at the British Legation nor in the Tycoon's Government. Ishii's discussion was merely *ex post facto reasoning* based on the fact that the suggestions of both Satow and Matsuki were similar to those in Alcock's memorandum.

However, it is possible that Satow explained the content of Alcock's memorandum to some Japanese intellectuals. In fact, in the very first part of his argument in *The Japan Times* on 16 March 1866, Satow provided an example of this by describing the ship of Satsuma.⁴³¹ Also, in his 1921 memoir, when he discussed the Tycoon's Government, he referred to the ship of Satsuma.⁴³² It is confirmed that Satow met with the samurais of Satsuma at various times. He may have explained the content of Alcock's memorandum to them, although in documents neither at the National Archives nor in Japanese primary materials is there any specific mention. Yet according to a Japanese eye-witness, Matsuki was captured by the British army during the bombardment of Kagoshima.⁴³³ Satow was the only Briton who could speak Japanese, so he must have translated for Matsuki and there could be an acquaintance dating from that time.⁴³⁴ After the foundation of the Meiji Government, Matsuki became the minister of foreign

⁴³¹ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

⁴³² Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 159.

⁴³³ Soho Tokutomi, *Meiji Ishin to Edo Bakufu, Vol. I* (Tokyo: Koudansha Gakujyutsu Bunko, 1979), 280.

⁴³⁴ In fact, in his diary Satow wrote about two Japanese who were captured from the ships of Satsuma: one of them was Matsuki Kouan. (PRO30/33/15/1, Satow Diary, 13 September 1863).

affairs; he was clearly an able samurai, and Satow would likely have recognised his intelligence. Japanese material proves that they met,⁴³⁵ albeit the date of their recorded talks was January 1867,⁴³⁶ after the publication of *Eikoku Sakuron*.

Finally, although it may be outside the main argument in relation to Satow's *Eikoku Sakuron*, one further question might be suggested. This is the relationship between Satow's essay and Mitogaku, the principal ideology of *Jyoi*. As already explained, the essence of Mitogaku was to define the Mikado as at the top of the hierarchy in Japan and that all Japanese should obey the imperial authority. And as a result of the wide spread of Mitogaku thinking, the promotion of *Jyoi* was energetic until 1865 when the Emperor Komei issued the imperial ratification for the 1858 Treaty. That is one perspective of Japanese history, but considering all this from another point of view, the question emerges: because the essence of Mitogaku had already spread among the Japanese, would they now receive any psychological impact from *Eikoku Sakuron*? This question needs to be analysed.

First of all, what was the definitive ideology of Mitogaku? It is hard to answer that question because Mitogaku was an academy which had been established right after the foundation of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Since then, academic research and argument had continued and it was the nineteenth-century Mito scholars who developed the ideology. Thus, in its strict meaning, Mitogaku is divided into "former Mitogaku" and "later

⁴³⁵ Tokutomi, *Meiji Ishin to Edo Bakufu*, Vol. I, 280.

⁴³⁶ Ibid., 279.

Mitogaku”,⁴³⁷ each with its own essence. In fact, it is “later Mitogaku” which has been commonly described as Mitogaku in Japanese history. Later Mitogaku defined itself as possessing a different nationalistic scholarship from the other.⁴³⁸ In this thesis, the later Mitogaku thinking is referred to as Mitogaku.

One of the major scholars who contributed to the ideology of Mitogaku was Aizawa Seishisai (1782-1863). He was a scholar of Mito and, at that time, the feudal lord of the Mito-Tokugawa family was Tokugawa Nariaki. In 1825 he wrote *Shinron* (New Ideology) and his book became one of the fundamentals of Mitogaku. *The Cambridge History of Japan* defines him as follows:

Aizawa Seishisai’s *Shinron* (1825) provided in particularly compelling form a warning of the power of the West, insistence on the sacred nature of Japan and its imperial party, and reminders that that superiority was based on the benefits of the imperial family.⁴³⁹

Shinron was judged to be widely read by the Japanese in the 1840s and 1850s.⁴⁴⁰ Thus, his book was the point at which Mitogaku and *Jyoi* became both academically linked and also widely spread among nineteenth-century educated Japanese.

What, then, was Aizawa’s focus? It has been considered that he tried to connect nationalistic scholarship and traditional values and then

⁴³⁷ Toshizumi Yoshida, *Mitogaku to Meiji Ishin* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Koubunkan, 2003), 1.

⁴³⁸ Ibid., 1.

⁴³⁹ Jansen, ‘The Meiji Restoration’, 314.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid., 314.

systematically tried to establish the ideology of *Sonno-Jyoi*. As a background, this situation can indeed be considered. Around the 1820s, the foreigners had started to visit Japan to open ports for commerce, and so, to react to them, the Japanese needed to be united under one definite set of ideas. That was why Mitogaku appealed to many nineteenth-century Japanese. In fact, the reason why Aizawa felt it necessary to write *Shinron* was because he was said to have believed that the foreigners were trying to invade Japanese soil.⁴⁴¹ Because of *Shinron*, nineteenth-century Japanese could have easily recognised the need for an increased nationalism. The effect of *Shinron* has been summed up as follows:

After Aizawa's *Shinron*, perhaps, for the first time in nearly two centuries, the legitimacy of the shogunal institution was specifically tied to its performance in foreign policy.⁴⁴²

The perceived need for Mitogaku and *Shinron* arose, therefore, from the arrival of the foreigners and continued to the foundation of the modern state. Otherwise, such ideas were not really necessary for the Japanese. Mitogaku became the major influence for the foundation of the modern Imperial system,⁴⁴³ because it deified the existence of the Emperor. Thus, this is the point on which Mitogaku was focused during the Meiji Restoration period. However, although it can be held that Mitogaku was necessary for the process of political modernization, it is equally the case that Mitogaku

⁴⁴¹ Koschmann, 89.

⁴⁴² Ronald P. Toby, *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan—Asia in the Development of the Tokugawa Bakufu* (Princeton University press, 1984), 242.

⁴⁴³ Yoshida, 4.

cannot provide all the sources of inspiration for modern Japan.⁴⁴⁴ That was because the essence of Mitogaku was never defined completely and stopped in the midst of forming theoretical arguments.⁴⁴⁵ As a result, because of the varieties of intellectual trends and persons at the time, Mitogaku came to incorporate a vague logical thinking which could be understood in almost any way.⁴⁴⁶

There is, however, one common element between Mitogaku and *Eikoku Sakuron*: both honoured the existence of the Mikado and defined the Tycoon, who was considered as the national representative at that time, lower in status than the Mikado. Thus, focusing only on that point, it must be concluded that nineteenth-century Japanese could not likely receive much psychological impact from *Eikoku Sakuron*. However, by analysing the differences between them, the reason why the Japanese received an impact from Satow can be realised. While Satow asserted that the Tycoon could not be the national sovereign of Japan, at the same time Mitogaku did not deny the status of the Tycoon at all.

In general, Mitogaku is misunderstood academically because Mitogaku honoured the position of the Mikado. It is true that the Meiji Restoration was promoted using the ideology of *Sonno*, and that the essence of *Sonno* was defined by Mitogaku. Thus, it is commonly believed that Mitogaku was an anti-Tycoon ideology. Indeed, Tohyama admitted that Mitogaku was the

⁴⁴⁴ Noboru Haga, *Kindai Mitogaku Kenkyushi* (Tokyo: Kyouiku Shuppan Center, 1996), 256.

⁴⁴⁵ Yoshida, 3.

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

ideological propulsion for the Meiji Restoration.⁴⁴⁷ However, this is a huge misunderstanding. While it is true that the essence of Mitogaku was *Sonno*, in fact that was a justification for the Tycoon to be the national representative of Japan.⁴⁴⁸ This means that the reason why Aizawa tried to establish the specific ideology of Mitogaku was neither to cause the Meiji Restoration nor to cause the collapse of the Tycoon's Government. He argued that the Tycoon's Government should be reformed under Imperial authority, even if that meant that the structure of the Tokugawa Shogunate would be changed. So, what was the plan by which Aizawa wished to promote internal reform? The following were its major points:

1. To define the Mikado as the pinnacle of social status and then to promote the reform of the Tokugawa Shogunate. In this reform, the social status and the social order should be changed if necessary.
2. The Tycoon should work for the Mikado voluntarily while citizens should also act under the leadership of the Tycoon on behalf of the Mikado.⁴⁴⁹

In essence, then, although foreigners had arrived in Japan, Aizawa did not suggest promoting rapid modernization. He tried to maintain the Shogunate, but by allowing the Tycoon to work for the Mikado. By redefining the Tycoon as a retainer of the Mikado, the Mikado's status would thus become absolute and more sacred than before. It must be noted that Aizawa was a scholar of the Mito-Tokugawa family whose feudal status was next to that of the

⁴⁴⁷ Koschmann, 33-34.

⁴⁴⁸ Haga, 186.

⁴⁴⁹ Yoshida, 83.

Tycoon, and comparable with the leading Owari and Kii Tokugawa families. Even so, he respected the Mikado, contending that the Tycoon's Government could not hold equal status with the Imperial Court, and, more than that, insisting that the Tycoon's Government should have to contribute to the Imperial Court.⁴⁵⁰ Implicitly, if the Tycoon's Government could not contribute to the Imperial Court then the *raison d'être* for the Tycoon would be lost. To be the national representative of Japan, the Tycoon must willingly work for the Mikado. In short:

Aizawa was concerned, after all, not to challenge Edo's monopoly on the conduct of external relations, but to shore it up by reference to the Shogun's source of authority.⁴⁵¹

Strengthening the Tycoon, via this focus on the place of the Mikado, would become the only method which would allow the Japanese to conduct affairs effectively with the Westerners.⁴⁵² Although the relationships between the Mikado, the Tycoon and the feudal lords would be changed, Aizawa was still trying to establish absolute feudalism.

After the promotion of ideas leading to the Meiji Restoration, however, although the essence of Aizawa's thinking was acknowledged, the direction taken was not what he had intended. This was especially so after 1865 when the Emperor Komei granted imperial ratification for the 1858 Treaty and events began to move in the direction of a collapse of the Tycoon's Government. After the abolition of *Jyoi*, the only idea which remained was

⁴⁵⁰ Koschmann, 181.

⁴⁵¹ Toby, 245.

⁴⁵² Yoshida, 145.

Sonno, and promoting *Sonno* could only mean the end of the Tycoon, otherwise *Sonno* could not be achieved. It was this that led Japanese historiography to assume that Mitogaku became a major inspiration for the Meiji Restoration.

Yet the truth is different. According to Tohyama, the reason why that situation had developed was because radical samurais interpreted the ideas of Aizawa and other scholars of Mitogaku more violently.⁴⁵³ Many Japanese who promoted the Meiji Restoration thus claimed that the slogan of *Sonno* was based on Mitogaku thought, but in reality their beliefs did not reflect the true meaning of *Sonno* but reflected instead an opportunistic interpretation of *Sonno* which would justify their actions. In other words, *Shinron* became the evidence needed to justify their own attitude. Historically, it has been said that although *Shinron* became the bible for the samurais, its most important section—the idea to reinforce the standing of the Tycoon—was completely ignored.⁴⁵⁴

The true meaning of *Sonno* was to unify not only the regions but also all social status under Imperial authority.⁴⁵⁵ According to Mitogaku, the rank of the Tycoon would admittedly be lower compared with that which Tokugawa Ieyasu had established, but still *Sonno* could never be seen as an ideology to destroy the Shogunate.⁴⁵⁶ However, since in the name of *Sonno*, feudalism became completely wiped out, it can, on that point, be concluded

⁴⁵³ Koschmann, 252.

⁴⁵⁴ Yoshida, 85.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid., 83.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid., 83.

that Mitogaku and *Shinron* were exploited by Satsuma and Choshu and, as a result, Mitogaku came to be regarded as essential for the Meiji Restoration.

By the above arguments, it can be shown that when Aizawa wrote *Shinron*, or when Mito scholars promoted the ideals of *Sonno*, none of them remotely aimed at the collapse of the Tycoon's Government. And that is the major difference compared with *Eikoku Sakuron*. Satow claimed that it was not the Tycoon but the Mikado who was the national sovereign of Japan. On that simple point, he did not specifically deny the existence of the Tycoon. However, he clearly stated that the confederate of Daimios under the Mikado would be the most appropriate regime for the future Japan, and that did constitute a denial of the Tycoon's position. It is there that *Eikoku Sakuron* likely provided its psychological impact on those Japanese hostile to the Tycoon.

Because *Shinron* contained a degree of questioning the Tokugawa Shogunate,⁴⁵⁷ notwithstanding that its final goal was to strengthen the Tycoon under the Mikado, those Japanese influenced by *Shinron* at first promoted *Jyoi*. That was also a big difference. *Shinron* directed the Japanese towards *Jyoi*, whereas *Eikoku Sakuron* directed them towards *Sonno*, and the directions were different. So, it cannot be said that because the Japanese could already have read *Shinron* since 1825, they received no psychological impact from *Eikoku Sakuron* in 1866.

Indeed, by 1866 times were very different. In 1825 *Jyoi* was traditional ideology and all Japanese would have considered that it was possible to

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid., 85.

promote *Jyoi*. However, after the bombardments of both Kagoshima and Shimonoseki, the Japanese had to face the fact that promoting *Jyoi* against the Westerners was now impossible. Then, finally in 1865, with the imperial ratification, the idea of *Jyoi* was completely demolished. That meant that the *raison d'être* of *Shinron* was also diminished. At that moment the Japanese encountered *Eikoku Sakuron*. Satow appeared to argue for the collapse of the Tycoon's government implicitly and thereby justify the Japanese who tried to achieve it. As a result, following *Eikoku Sakuron*, the Japanese started to look towards the Meiji Restoration, while at the same time endorsing those parts of *Shinron* which would justify their cultural attitudes. In other words, everything about the Meiji Restoration was *ex post facto* reasoning. In fact, it has been summed up as follows:

If the definition of the Meiji Restoration is limited to the events of 1867 and 1868, it continued little more than a coup that shifted rule from one sector of the ruling class to another.⁴⁵⁸

One principal characteristic of the Meiji Restoration was that there was no consistency throughout that period. Thus it can be concluded that at the time Satow wrote *Eikoku Sakuron* the essence of *Shinron* had already diminished. Hence there could be many Japanese who were impressed by his essays, or, at least to justify their actions and status after the Meiji Restoration, were prepared to claim such a thing in public.

⁴⁵⁸ Jansen, 'The Meiji Restoration', 360.

In conclusion, the existence of Alcock's memorandum, the suggestions of Matsuki, and also Hope's letter all suggested that *Eikoku Sakuron* was not entirely Satow's own work. There were various guidelines for Japanese modernization already being considered by the British and Satow might simply have followed those. In Japanese academic writing, however, the existence of Alcock's memorandum, Hope's letter and Matsuki's suggestions are forgotten and only *Eikoku Sakuron* is focused upon. It is true that the Japanese subsequently founded the Meiji Government whose political structure was not so different from *Eikoku Sakuron*, and the Japanese have always insisted that Satow's essays provided the guideline for this modernization. The truth, however, may be obscured by that assumption.

Chapter VII: Alcock's Memorandum

The previous chapter explained how in *Eikoku Sakuron* Satow was not the first Westerner in Japan to question whether binding international agreements could properly be made with the Tycoon's Government. The originality of Satow's ideas is also called into doubt on account of

simultaneous representations made by Matsuki Kouan in London in March 1866. Kouan likewise suggested that treaty legality and enforcement could only be assured if international agreements were endorsed by an assembly of daimyos under imperial authority. In his writings, Satow could well have been influenced by other foreign accounts of Japanese society and political organisation published in 1862 and 1864 and, crucially, by a memorandum written by Rutherford Alcock at the British Legation. To provide, therefore, the fullest context for *Eikoku Sakuron*, Alcock's earlier assessment of Japanese politics, of Britain's relations with Japan, and of the dangers which he believed had arisen, requires a careful evaluation.

As indicated earlier, Alcock wrote his 1864 memorandum about two weeks after the British, French, Dutch and American fleets bombarded Shimonoseki, because in 1863, in the name of *Jyoi*, Choshu had fired on foreign vessels passing through the Shimonoseki strait. In 1863 the British fleet had also bombarded Kagoshima, so for Alcock these two incidents required an urgent consideration of the diplomatic relationship with the Tycoon's Government. For Alcock, it was time to consider Japan's future, and to hope that after those bombardments, radical Japanese would give up the idea of *Jyoi*.

In the first paragraph of the memorandum, Alcock wrote *Sako*.⁴⁵⁹ This word means *to close the port* and it was a major goal for those Japanese who promoted *Jyoi*. In fact, the Imperial Court had strongly pressured the Tycoon's Government to achieve *Jyoi*, and a mission was sent to Europe to

⁴⁵⁹ FO881/1342, Memorandum on Foreign Policy in Japan, 22 September 1864.

negotiate the closure of the port of Yokohama in February 1864. In that context, the word *Sako* spread among the Japanese. The mission, however, could not achieve its purpose and returned to Japan in August, but by this incident Alcock probably started to distrust the diplomatic attitude of the Tycoon's Government because the object of its negotiation was out of the question in international law. He also might have feared that the Tycoon's Government would arbitrarily cancel the treaties of 1854 and 1858 because it lacked any notion of diplomatic relations. That was why he referred to *Sako*. Using armed force against Choshu reflected his distrust of the Tycoon's Government, and might serve as a warning to all Japanese of the impossibility of promoting *Jyoi*.

In 1864 Alcock concluded that the Tycoon could not be the ruler of Japan, either in name or in reality. However, that did not mean that Alcock believed the Mikado should replace him. In fact, he went on to say that giving control of finances to the Mikado would cause great danger.⁴⁶⁰ He recognized both Japanese tradition and Japanese national identity, which was why he insisted that the Mikado should not be associated with secular matters. Alcock seemed to question whether the Imperial Court had ever been under strict surveillance by the Tycoon's Government, which was why the Imperial Court now had to become subordinate to the Government in return for financial support. Therefore, for the purpose of clarifying and securing the status of the Mikado, he suggested that 10-20% of the benefits

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid.

from foreign trade should become the Mikado's income in the name of *Royalty*.⁴⁶¹ Yet if Alcock thought that by contributing a certain amount of money this would be a first step towards the Mikado's independence and to the Mikado becoming sovereign of Japan, he appeared to ignore the fact that the Tycoon's Government had succeeded in its 260 years of governance by hiding the existence of the Mikado from the public.

Alcock stressed the advantage to be gained by changing the present political situation:

By publicly and effectively renouncing all pretensions or right to exclude any produce coming to the Consular ports, thus freely permitting the Daimios to share in the profits of foreign trade hitherto monopolised in a very impolite manner by the Tycoon himself.⁴⁶²

In other words, by allowing other feudal lords to participate in international trade the vested interests which had been dominated by the Tycoon would collapse. Satow followed Alcock's idea and in *The Japan Times* on 16 March and 19 May 1866 he criticised the Tycoon by highlighting Article XIV of the 1858 Treaty.⁴⁶³ The logic was different but Alcock and Satow shared the same idea for the same purpose: they both criticised the Tycoon for monopolising international trade by excluding other feudal lords, thereby strengthening his own economic and political power. Although they both acknowledged the existence of the Tycoon, they denied his sovereign status and so could not turn a blind eye to anything which would reinforce his

⁴⁶¹ Ibid.

⁴⁶² Ibid.

⁴⁶³ *The Japan Times* (16 March and 19 May 1866).

position. As for other feudal lords being able to participate in Japan's international trade, Alcock wrote:

In which case, Kagoshima and Shimonoseki might be opened with many collateral advantages. ⁴⁶⁴

It will recalled that in 1862 Her Majesty's Government had concluded the London Protocol with the Tycoon's Government, the major agreement of which was to postpone for five years opening the cities of Edo and Osaka, and the ports of Hyogo and Niigata. That meant that in 1864 the only ports which were open for international trade were Yokohama, Hakodate and Nagasaki. Alcock doubtless assumed that these three ports would not be sufficient for trade, which was why he stipulated Kagoshima and Shimonoseki. Admittedly these were the places which had been bombarded, but they nevertheless looked appropriate for increasing trade. Perhaps Satow simply followed Alcock when in *The Japan Times* on 16 March 1866 he wrote that, in case of allowing the feudal lords to participate in international trade, one or two more ports would be enough.⁴⁶⁵ Satow did not mention, however, which ports to open.

After that, for the purpose of warning about *Jyoi*, Alcock suggested the foundation of the Corps Diplomatique.⁴⁶⁶ He did not provide much detail, insisting only that the Corps Diplomatique should have the right to live in Edo and also to use the Tokaido connecting Edo with Nagoya.⁴⁶⁷ It is hard to

⁴⁶⁴ FO881/1342, Memorandum on Foreign Policy in Japan, 22 September 1864.

⁴⁶⁵ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

⁴⁶⁶ FO881/1342, Memorandum on Foreign Policy in Japan, 22 September 1864.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.

understand why exactly he proposed this, although it might be assumed that it was to unite the foreign ministers and their staffs, thereby to strengthen their diplomatic privileges in Japan and perhaps to protect their lives and property. When Alcock proposed that only the Corps Diplomatique should have the right to use the Tokaido, however, his suggestion was important. He was trying to avoid further conflict between Japanese and foreigners and wrote as follows:

So, as to travelling in the interior or on the tokaido, where
Daimios suffer the greatest mortification in meeting and being
hustled by foreigners of all demonstrations-merchants, storekeepers
butchers coloured and white-all the motley and promiscuous denizens
of a sea-port in the East.⁴⁶⁸

Alcock's comments were naturally influenced by the events of September 1862 when Richardson had been killed near Namamugi, which had resulted in the bombardment of Kagoshima in 1863. Faced with advanced British military technology, the Richardson affair may have provided an opportunity for Japanese to consider the need for modernization, but, from Alcock's point of view, it was best to avoid any repetition. Hence only the Corps Diplomatique had the right to use Tokaido; other foreigners should use a road which was located four or five miles away.⁴⁶⁹ In the event of another such incident Alcock feared having to negotiate with the Tycoon's Government, which had already shown itself unable to govern effectively, and then there was a possibility that the British fleet would be in action

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid.

again. That would mean a significant delay and cost for the British in promoting active trade with Japan. It would also mean that the Tycoon's Government's inability to deal with both domestic affairs and diplomacy would again be revealed and, as a result, the Japanese would become even more distrustful of the Tycoon, making civil war more likely. These outcomes remained only as possibilities but, either way, not only Japanese but also the British would suffer a great disadvantage in both diplomacy and commerce. As long as the idea of *Jyoi* remained prevalent among the Japanese, Alcock tried to avoid any trouble between Japanese and foreigners.

With this object in view, Alcock also wrote the following:

Finally, there should be a distinct act of the Mikado and Tycoon conjoined, repealing the ancient law of Gongen-sama hostile to foreigners.⁴⁷⁰

Gongen-sama meant Tokugawa Ieyasu, the founder of the Tokugawa Shogunate in 1603, whom the Japanese revered. The major code and laws to maintain the Tokugawa Shogunate had been created by him, so Alcock clearly thought that by altering the code and laws of Tokugawa Ieyasu, he could try to change the political conditions in Japan. The final goal was, as he mentioned, the unification of the Mikado and the Tycoon. In fact, in March 1862, a sister of Emperor Komei, princess Kazunomiya, had married the 14th Tycoon, Tokugawa Iemochi, and as a result the Japanese considered that a new political structure was already formed. However, for Alcock, that might not be enough, because, although the Imperial Court and the Tycoon's

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.

Government now had closer relations, still the traditional laws and values existed. In reality and ideologically, their ties by a marriage agreement would not be effective.

Alcock continued:

Partly by law and partly by direct intervention of authority on the free intercourse of foreigners and Japanese, whatever the rank or position of the latter. Nor should any Daimio be restricted in giving, or foreigner in accepting, invitations to visit him within his own territories, and to reside there in such Daimio's employment.⁴⁷¹

In saying this, Alcock argued that without intercourse with foreigners, the Japanese could not reconsider their national identity and traditional values. Because the Japanese state had been closed for about 260 years, the population held the strong conservative ideas which had created *Jyoi*. If *Jyoi* remained a force it was possible that the Tycoon's Government could retain a secular and intellectual credibility, which would mean that a Government characterized by diplomatic failures would continue as the national authority in Japan. The Tycoon's Government was characteristic of feudalism, so while feudalism existed so would the Government. Also, *Jyoi* would exist too. By communicating with foreigners, feudalistic elements would disappear because the Japanese could develop a new sense of values. Hence both Alcock and Satow insisted that all the feudal lords should freely participate in international trade independently of any rights under treaty

⁴⁷¹ Ibid.

articles. In this way they wished to give the Japanese an opportunity to promote modernization by their own efforts after they had experienced the more advanced elements of Western civilization; having experienced western culture and technology, the Japanese would abandon feudalism on their own initiative. In fact, Alcock concluded:

But it is of infinite importance, not only as an outlet for hot blood and the more adventurous and restless spirits, a safety valve of by which an excess of explosive power might be got rid of; but as also opening the way for new light to penetrate into the country through Japanese minds, and for the removal of procedures, much more safely and effectually than by foreigners travelling among them.⁴⁷²

It could be argued that Alcock's discussion of Japan's future in such a one-sided way displayed haughtiness and that his attitude went against the diplomatic stance of Her Majesty's Government, which was neutrality in domestic affairs in Japan. However, his assumption was that if the Japanese did not promote modernization themselves, then the Western states which had relations with Japan would endure diplomatic struggles and also that foreigners in Japan would be in constant fear of their lives or property. For Alcock, to construct a regime which was not feudal would be beneficial for everybody in Japan, and the first step was greater intercourse between Japanese and foreigners. Alcock's other notion, to let the radical Japanese become dejected by demonstrating advanced western military power, was continued by his successor, Harry Parkes. Alcock explained as follows:

⁴⁷² Ibid.

If some outward show of the importance attached to such action on the part of the four Representatives were made, by a squadron of ships under their respective flags accompanying them and anchoring opposite Yeddo, their task, and that of the Gorogio also, might be all the easier.⁴⁷³

That was why, in November 1865, under Parkes's leadership, British, French and Dutch warships anchored in the Sea of Hyogo to demand imperial ratification for the 1858 Treaty and also an early opening of the port of Hyogo.

Alcock had previously advised that this action should occur in the Sea of Edo, but although Parkes followed the same policy, the place was different. Hyogo (modern Kobe) was a suburb of Kyoto, and Kyoto was the centre for the idea of *Sonno-Jyoi*. The Emperor Komei had been insisting on the promotion of *Jyoi*, and had been pressuring the Tycoon's Government. That was one of the factors which had led the Government into recent diplomatic failures. Parkes arrived in Japan just four months before the action in the Sea of Hyogo, but he must have recognized beforehand the domestic situation. Because the Imperial Court was causing diplomatic difficulties, so to change its awareness of diplomacy, Alcock's policy would not be altered. Of course, the British did not have any intention to start a war, but, following Alcock's guideline, Parkes nonetheless sent the fleets to Hyogo. As a result, after this show of military force, the Imperial Court

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

abandoned the idea of *Sonno-Jyoi*, and although they refused to open the port of Hyogo earlier than agreed, they did ratify the 1858 Treaty. Had Parkes not sent the navy, arguably nothing would have changed because the Court nobles understood nothing about the Westerners and would have remained as conservative as before.

Finally, Alcock suggested *A great Council of Daimios* as a new political organization, although this idea needs careful analysis. He did not suggest it as the replacement for the Tycoon's Government to be a responsible regime representing the national sovereignty of Japan. This is clear because in the next paragraph he wrote: *If the ratification of existing Treaties by the Mikado, and their acceptance by the Daimios, could be obtained as a first result.*⁴⁷⁴ Judging from this statement, he focused on imperial ratification, not any new regime. Alcock had always sensed that the treaties with the Tycoon's Government were meaningless because there was no imperial ratification and also because there was no participation from the other feudal lords.

Satow, of course, was also influenced by this idea when he suggested the Confederate Daimios. Its purpose was the same as Alcock had suggested: the British should give up the treaty with the Tycoon and then deal with the major feudal lords.⁴⁷⁵ While this approach might also be construed somewhat arrogant because it involved manipulating Japanese domestic affairs, nevertheless Satow was essentially discussing potential developments in Japan's political future. It was correct as a general analysis,

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁵ *The Japan Times* (16 March 1866).

although not in detail. Like Alcock, Satow complained about the treaty with the Tycoon's Government and the diplomatic problem which had been caused by it. However, were present conditions reformed, the British would not then have any complaint. They were focusing on changing the political situation, not intending to cause a collapse of the Tycoon's Government.

In fact, Alcock wrote about the purpose of the Council of Daimios as follows:

In that case their place of meeting should, if possible, be Osaka rather than Kyoto, and there at the same time the four Representatives might be ready freely to discuss with the Gorogio, and leading members of the Daimio class who might desire it, the relative merits of these various propositions for the advantage of all, and the preservation of peace.⁴⁷⁶

Gorogio means *Rojyu*, who were the chiefs of the cabinet in the Tycoon's Government, which was why Alcock suggested that not only major feudal lords but also *Rojyu* should be invited to attend that council. He probably considered that was the only means to create what was called the *total Japanese will*. In addition, Alcock added observations concerning the effectiveness of that council:

That such fundamental changes in the foreign policy of the country should be only attainable by a certain pressure, in which force or intimidation can hardly be said to be altogether absent, is not peculiar to Japan.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁶ FO881/1342, Memorandum on Foreign Policy in Japan, 22 September 1864.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid.

The bombardments at both Kagoshima and Shimonoseki and also anchoring the fleets in the Sea of Hyogo were effective for showing military superiority, but in the meantime there were clear disadvantages. For example, the British could not keep repeating that option, which in any case always contained the possibility of a war with the Japanese. To avoid that, he suggested the assembly of major feudal lords as a priority. He used the word *Conciliatory*, so must have considered that showing a moderate as well as sometimes a severe attitude would encourage the Japanese to give up radical ideas themselves without any enforcement by the foreigners. Judging from this, Alcock had no wish for conflict with Japan and tried to provide an opportunity for the Japanese to start their own modernization.

Although Alcock wrote *A great Council of Daimios*, he did not specify which daimios would be chosen. This was, however, his first step to move away from maintaining diplomatic relations only with the Tycoon's Government. That was why he wrote as follows:

Unhappy domestic relations lead almost inevitably, and by a natural process, to unsatisfactory intercourse with strangers; and with States and Empires, to unwise foreign policy. ⁴⁷⁸

Alcock recognized that the present situation could only cause relations to deteriorate. Yet he was not allowed to become involved in Japanese domestic affairs. The only thing he could do was to write this memorandum, send it to Her Majesty's Government, and let the cabinet understand the present situation in Japan. He also expected the British Government to be concerned

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid.

about Japan's future. As it was, his ideas had a big impact on Satow, Matsuki and Parkes.

Alcock was clearly not an optimist nor was he sure whether his proposals could establish a good diplomatic relationship with the Japanese. However, maintaining the present situation, could only make matters worse. That was why he mentioned the possibility of war, and his fear of this was evidence of how Japanese domestic politics had become chaotic. As Minister in Japan since the ports had been opened under the 1858 Treaty, he knew the Japanese political situation better than any other British observer.

Reviewing Satow's *Eikoku Sakuron* and the proposals by Matsuki in 1866, there were several points apparently influenced by Alcock's 1864 memorandum. Although nobody, including Parkes, mentioned the importance of this memorandum, judging by their actions it seems obvious that without it they could not have achieved what they did. Without Alcock's memorandum, the Japanese might never have promoted modernization by their own efforts, and, in the meantime, the British could not have established acceptable diplomatic relations. By that logic, not only the Japanese but also the British were greatly influenced by Alcock.

One last thing must be clarified: Alcock did not discuss either a Two House system of Parliament or elections in his memorandum. Nor did he show any sense of creating a constitutional monarchy. That was also true with *Eikoku Sakuron*. Since the Meiji Restoration, the Japanese have commonly understood that by Satow's effort and *Eikoku Sakuron* their

nation could move towards political modernization. As a result, they have long thought that Satow considered a constitutional monarchy and a parliamentary system in detail. However, that idea is wrong. Neither Alcock nor Satow discussed the future Japanese regime at all. Furthermore, although they criticised the Tycoon's Government, they did not agitate the Japanese towards any revolution. In an ideological sense, *Eikoku Sakuron* became defined as the turning point in the Meiji Restoration, and as a result, Satow was deemed to be the person whose efforts made a significant contribution. That idea, however, is based often only on guesswork or an incomplete knowledge of the evidence available.

Indeed, after analysing Alcock's memorandum, it can be shown that the British had never contemplated the collapse of the Tycoon's Government. Alcock seriously worried about the future of Japan, and in some detail, so, on that point alone, it might look as if he were involving himself in Japanese domestic affairs. However, Alcock focused not only on the benefits for Britain which would be created by free trade but also considered strengthening the Tycoon's Government as part of any future regime. In fact, when explaining the reason why he had sanctioned the bombardment of Shimonoseki to the British Government, he claimed that there was a need to secure the Tycoon's Government from collapse as much as possible.⁴⁷⁹ Unlike the bombardment of Kagoshima in 1863, the bombardment of Shimonoseki was not approved in Britain, because no British lives were threatened. Again, then, Alcock's action might be considered as a proof of his involvement in Japanese

⁴⁷⁹ FO46/47, Alcock to Russell, 19 November 1864.

domestic affairs. Yet, the true purpose of his bombardment of Shimonoseki was to support the Tycoon's Government indirectly by defeating Choshu, which at the time manifested a strong attitude of *Jyoi*. Thus, Alcock's memorandum is evidence that not only did the British not involve themselves in Japanese domestic affairs, but, if anything, they indirectly supported the Tycoon.

There was no constitutional revolution immediately after 1868. It was only in 1890 that the Japanese founded a Two House system of Parliament and promulgated the constitution which had been established in 1889. By considering that, it becomes easy to understand why Goto Shojiro, who was considered to be the man most influenced by Satow, could not achieve his plan right after the civil war. Alcock and Satow neither discussed the future of the Japanese regime in detail nor did they force their ideas on the Japanese. As James Hoare concluded in 2000:

There was in reality no British plot to 'sabotage the Shogun' and the clever Mr. Satow's articles in the Japan Times may have been widely read in Japan as 'Eikoku Sakuron', but they seemed to have had no effect on official policy.⁴⁸⁰

This seems to be the prevailing attitude among British historians regarding *Eikoku Sakuron*. It took about 30 years to found the constitutional monarchy. That is a point the Japanese still misunderstand about the influence of Satow.

⁴⁸⁰ James Hoare, 'The Era of Unequal Treaties, 1858-99', in Nish and Kibata (eds.), *The History of Anglo-Japanese Relations, Vol.I*, 110.

Chapter VIII: The Meiji Restoration

When Satow advocated a future Japanese political system as Confederate Daimios under imperial authority in *The Japan Times* in March and May 1866, he, of course, was not British Minister. His job was to translate, and when he wrote *Eikoku Sakuron* he was only 23 years old. To that extent, his actions and the content of his argument might seem surprising.

How was Satow regarded by the British? Mitford, who was a diplomatic colleague at the British Legation, wrote in his memoir:

He it was who swept away the cobwebs of the old Dutch diplomacy, and by an accurate study of Japanese history and of Japanese customs and traditions realized and gave true

value to the position of the Shogun, showing that the Mikado alone was the sovereign of Japan.⁴⁸¹

Mitford thus saw Satow as the person who brought British diplomatic influence to bear on the Tycoon's Government. Traditionally, the Tycoon's Government had maintained relations with the Dutch, hence Satow's political approach influenced not only the Japanese but also the British. As evidence of that, Mitford referred to the 15th Tycoon Tokugawa Yoshinobu as an *Anachronism*.⁴⁸² The British had recognized the Tycoon as the national sovereign of Japan since making the 1854 treaty and subsequently tried to maintain a good diplomatic relationship with the Tycoon's Government. However, after *Eikoku Sakuron*, the British started to alter their attitude and gradually broke with the Tycoon. Mitford's expression showed that change vividly. The difficulty, however, was to imagine what would be a suitable future political structure for Japan, which was why the British could do nothing but maintain their existing relations with the Tycoon, even though his Government showed inability to exercise national sovereignty.

Satow's appeal for reform in Japanese domestic affairs did not address any particular person or cite any individual. He tried to appeal more widely in the hope of reaching sympathizers in Japan. So who sympathized with his essay? Mitford wrote:

The Prince of Awa swears that he is the Admiral's son
and elder brother to Sir Harry Parkes; Awaji no kami, the

⁴⁸¹ Redesdale, *Memories*, Vol. I, 377.

⁴⁸² Ibid., 394.

Prince's son, claims intimate relationship with Satow.⁴⁸³

The name, *the Prince of Awa*, also appeared in a different place: in Satow's memoir. There, Satow wrote that he had written the essay about reducing the Tycoon's social status for the purpose of handing it to the Prince of Awa.⁴⁸⁴ Judging from the writings of Satow and Mitford, it could be assumed that there was a strong relationship between Satow and the Prince of Awa, not only in public but also in private. In addition, Harry Parkes also had a relationship with him, because, by following the life of Satow, it can be confirmed that Parkes and Admiral Keppel had visited Hachisuka Narihiro (1821-68), who was the Prince of Awa, in August 1867. It is not certain that Satow was present, but, since his main work was to interpret, he probably was. In fact, in the month after that meeting, he visited Kouchi Castle to meet Yamauchi Youdou, who was the former Prince of Tosa. Tosa was adjacent to Awa, so, considering transport difficulties in the nineteenth century, Satow likely visited Tosa right after visiting Awa. This would suggest that after *Eikoku Sakuron* the relationship between Satow and the Prince of Awa strengthened.

Judging from the above, it might be concluded that, based on his relationship with the British, the Prince of Awa contributed much to promote the Meiji Restoration. However, in historical accounts, there is no mention of him in the Meiji Restoration. Neither he nor his samurais joined either the Battle of Toba-Fushimi on 27-30 January 1868 or attended the conference on

⁴⁸³ Redesdale, *Memories*, Vol. II, 411.

⁴⁸⁴ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 159.

3 January 1868 which opened after Tokugawa Yoshinobu had returned his political authority to the Imperial Court. These incidents are both defined as turning points in Japanese history. By the former incident, the ex-Tycoon's Government was defeated completely and as a result their collapse was proved vividly to all Japanese. By the latter incident, the Japanese could completely wipe out both feudalism and the traditional nobility system of the Imperial Court, and, as a result, create the groundwork to establish a modern political structure.

When Mitford analysed Japanese domestic affairs at the time of the civil war in 1868-69 he wrote:

Aidzu⁴⁸⁵: Men who were ready to lay down their lives, and did
Actually die, for the honour of the Tokugawa.
Satsuma, Choshu⁴⁸⁶, Tosa, Uwajima: Moving heaven and earth for the
deposition of the Shogun.⁴⁸⁷

Mitford's description also indicates that the Prince of Awa did not involve himself in the Meiji Restoration. Therefore, although Hachisuka clearly did have a private relationship with both Parkes and Satow, that did not mean that he was strongly influenced by the British concerning Japan's future.

So, which influential Japanese did sympathize with and were influenced by Satow's ideas? There was certainly one samurai: Goto Shojiro of Tosa. This is known because his name appears in the memoirs of both Satow and Mitford. According to Satow:

⁴⁸⁵ Mitford wrote *Aidzu*, but correct spelling is *Aizu*.

⁴⁸⁶ Correct spelling is *Choshu*.

⁴⁸⁷ Redesdale, *Memories*, Vol. I, 387.

After dinner Goto came on board to have a talk on politics. He spoke his idea of establishing a parliament, and a constitution on the English model, and said that Saigo entertained similar notions.⁴⁸⁸

Several Japanese names appear in his memoir, but regarding political discussion, Satow wrote only of Goto. That might suggest that Goto was the only Japanese who had been seriously considering a future political structure, and also who could discuss political affairs with an equal understanding to the British. Goto was judged to be a knowledgeable samurai by Satow. Mitford also had a high regard for Goto and described him as follows:

Like famous Saigo, of Satsuma, and others of the leaders in the various clans, Goto expressed himself as keenly anxious to establish a Gi-ji-in, or parliament.⁴⁸⁹

The name of Saigo also appears in both memoirs. This was, of course, Saigo Takamori. Because Goto is not one of the three major heroes of the Meiji Restoration, for the Japanese, Saigo is much better known.⁴⁹⁰ However, judging from the descriptions by Satow and Mitford, Goto was perhaps more insightful than Saigo because Goto had already been studying the British political structure, hence Satow's discussion of political affairs with Goto.

What was Goto's plan for modernization? In Japanese history, it has always been accepted that the reason why Tokugawa Yoshinobu returned his

⁴⁸⁸ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 267.

⁴⁸⁹ Redesdale. *Memories*, Vol.II, 409.

⁴⁹⁰ In fact, Mounsey judged Saigo to be a man who had acquired a popularity and prestige greater than that of any other individual in the empire. (Mounsey, 110).

political authority to the Imperial Court was that he had been petitioned by Yamauchi Youdou. And the person who had handed that petition to Yamauchi was Goto. So what was the content of Goto's petition? The first issue was to return the Tycoon's political authority to the Imperial Court.⁴⁹¹ This was called *Taisei-Houkan* in Japanese.

According to most of the material written by the British, two historical incidents, *Taisei-Houkan* and *Osei-Fukko* (which means the recovery of ancient imperial authority) were together defined as *The Restoration of Imperial rule*. However, for the Japanese, *Taisei-Houkan* and *Osei-Fukko* were separate and could not be recognized as one event. Thus, some discussion of *Taisei-Houkan* is necessary.

Judging from Mitford's memoir, Tosa was a fief displaying anti-Tycoon Government sentiment from the beginning of the Meiji Restoration. That was not true, however, in the strict sense of the word. It was true that Tosa had been on the side of the Imperial Court, but in the meantime Tosa also sympathized with the Tycoon's Government. In fact, Tosa had played the role of intermediary between them since 1854. At the time of the Battle of Toba-Fushimi in January 1868, Tosa maintained neutrality until the imperial flag was given to the Satsuma and Choshu side. Only after Tokugawa Yoshinobu was defined as enemy of the state by the Imperial Court did Tosa give up supporting him.

Why in the petition did Goto insist on *Taisei-Houkan*? The reason was that, on the anti-Tycoon side, there were various radical samurais who

⁴⁹¹ Isao Inoue, *Osei Fukko—Keio 3 nen 12 gastu 9 ka no Seihen* (Tokyo: Chuo Kouronsha, 1991), 167.

would not hesitate to provoke civil war. His colleague, Inui Taisuke (1837-1919), who changed his name to Itagaki Taisuke and promoted the movement for demanding democratic rights under the Meiji Government, was one example.⁴⁹² After *Eikoku Sakuron*, unlike before, no Japanese considered the existing Tycoon's Government as a future regime. All Japanese contemplated its elimination; the only difference among them was whether it would be done peacefully or not. Goto chose the peaceful method and *Taisei-Houkan* was the only solution for this. Goto did not write any memoir, so it is hard to analyse his decision in detail, but, considering his political activities, one important principle can be guessed. It was that his goal was to found the new regime without a battle. Civil war caused nothing but disaster in domestic affairs. This attitude might well have been influenced by the British.

After the achievement of *Taisei-Houkan*, Goto next considered the foundation of *Giji-in*, which means Parliament in Japanese. That idea appeared in the articles of an alliance between Tosa and Satsuma in 1867. According to their alliance, they agreed to co-operate for the purpose of achieving a two House system of Parliament which imitated the British model. Eligibility for political office should range from feudal lords and Court nobles to ordinary citizens and social status should not be questioned.⁴⁹³ Goto considered that for the purpose of founding the new regime under imperial authority, not only Court nobles who supported the Mikado but also feudal lords and samurais should attend the Parliament. Therefore, he

⁴⁹² Ibid., 142.

⁴⁹³ Ibid., 165.

planned that Court nobles and feudal lords should be in an upper House while samurais should form a lower House.⁴⁹⁴ In *Eikoku Sakuron*, Satow proposed the creation of Confederate Daimios under the Mikado, but he did not say anything about a Parliament. Thus, different from Satow's proposal, Goto envisaged a new regime which would be more consistent with Japanese tradition and customs. The only common points between Satow and Goto were placing the new regime under imperial authority and maintaining the existence of feudal lords.

In the meantime, for the British Legation the priority was to avoid civil war, otherwise active commercial relations between the British and Japanese since the Tariff Convention of 1866 would be destroyed. Satow would certainly have considered that danger, which was why he discussed British political structures with Goto. Following Goto's petition, Tokugawa Yoshinobu returned his political authority to the Imperial Court on 9 November 1867, and, as a result, nominally, the Tycoon's Government was abolished peacefully. That was what Goto, and probably Satow, had expected and was their purpose in advocating change.

Judging from the above, then, the Japanese who was influenced most by *Eikoku Sakuron* was Goto Shojiro, and the Japanese, it appeared, were moving toward a future based on British influence. However, considering political events after *Taisei-Houkan*, this process could not develop along the lines which Goto and Satow had contemplated. The details will be discussed later, but essentially the Meiji Government which was founded by the

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid., 169.

Japanese was moderated neither by Goto nor Satow. In fact, it was very different from what Satow had urged in 1866 in *The Japan Times*. Until 1890 the Japanese failed to establish a constitutional monarchy based on two Houses of Parliament and a national election system. Since it was in May 1868 that, as an act of unconditional surrender, Tokugawa Yoshinobu left Edo Castle after the Battle of Toba-Fushimi, and in May 1869 that the ex-Tycoon's Government remaining military force at Hakodate surrendered to the Imperial Court, it therefore took about 20 years to found the modern political structure following *Taisei-Houkan*. In the meantime, the new regime had tried to establish a modern structure by trial and error, at the end of which neither ordinary citizens nor feudal lords and samurais who had not been on the side of the Imperial Court from the beginning could participate in national politics. Furthermore, there had been a power struggle among the victors. None of this had featured in the ideas of Satow and Goto.

Although Goto was one Japanese who could understand Satow's vision and had his own for the future of Japan, there was no political base from which to promote his ideas. Furthermore, the Japanese who could understand his vision were not the majority. That was why Goto was never considered to be a major hero of the Meiji Restoration. In Japan, ironically, the person who perhaps best understood British policy and tried to found a new regime based on it could not be recognized as a hero, but those who willingly promoted civil war were considered to be so. Aside from the power struggle among them, Japanese at the time were initially reluctant to

acknowledge British influence to achieve the Meiji Restoration, because the Meiji Restoration was the first step towards Japanese modernization and they did not wish to admit any foreign influence for the sake of bolstering their national identity. Perhaps that was to be expected; nevertheless, it took 20 years to achieve that result. There are, of course, various opinions and historical viewpoints about the Meiji Restoration, but they do have one common notion. It is that *Eikoku Sakuron* by Satow has come to be regarded as the key for Japanese modernization, even though Japanese in the late nineteenth century largely ignored his plan. Japanese historiography continues strongly to define him as an important person in the Meiji Restoration.

As discussed, Tokugawa Yoshinobu returned his political authority to the Imperial Court by accepting Goto's petition. What, though, was the ideological dimension to that decision? *Tycoon* was the title by which the foreigners had referred to the Shogun. The official designation was Sei-i-Tai-Shogun; in English, that title translates as *Barbarian-quelling-Generalissimo*,⁴⁹⁵ and it contained an important message. The origin of the Shogun was for the purpose of subjugating the barbarians, and the Mikado gave that title to the major warrior to act as the Mikado's deputy. As time passed and after the decline of the Mikado and the Imperial Court, that title began to acquire a stronger political authority. As a result, although Shoguns did not fight against barbarians, they retained that

⁴⁹⁵ *Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. XI, 825.

status. In the early modern era, the concept of the Shogun had thus changed from its origins.

However, although in this secular aspect the concept had changed, the title was still given from the Imperial Court for the notional purpose of fighting the barbarians. In fact, Alcock wrote as follows in 1863:

That the Mikado is the hereditary sovereign of the empire, the descendant of a long and uninterrupted line of sovereigns of the same dynasty, and the only sovereign *de jure* recognized true sovereign in all the legal attributes of sovereignty; and that the Tycoon receives investiture from him as his Lieutenant or Generalissimo, *and as such only*, the head of the Executive, — is known to most readers of the present day.⁴⁹⁶

His statement was the best analysis available of the relationship between the Mikado and the Shogun. Alcock pointed out the Mikado's superiority when in London on leave. That was four years before Tokugawa Yoshinobu returned his political authority to the Mikado. Yet although under the Tokugawa Shogunate the authority and activities of the Mikado and the Imperial Court had been severely restricted by the codes, that did not mean that imperial dignity had declined. Although the Imperial Court was restricted, the Tycoon's Government existed by virtue of trust from the Mikado, otherwise the regime itself could not be justified.⁴⁹⁷ However, as a result of diplomatic failures after 1853, the system of domestic governance had started to collapse. Therefore, according to established ideology, the Tycoon would now have to give political authority back to the Mikado by way

⁴⁹⁶ Alcock, *The Capital of the Tycoon*, Vol. I, 226.

⁴⁹⁷ Isao Inoue, 166.

of taking responsibility for domestic confusion; if the Tycoon showed inability to be the national representative of Japan then the Mikado could cancel his status. The title of Shogun was given for the purpose of maintaining domestic peace and order, not for the Shogun's own self-respect. Tokugawa Yoshinobu had to return his authority because the major feudal lords were ceasing to co-operate in maintaining the feudal Tokugawa Shogunate.

These factors formed the background to why Goto handed his petition to Tokugawa Yoshinobu. His action was neither revolt nor revolution. In both secular and ideological aspects, Goto saw no choice but to return political authority to the Imperial Court, otherwise there would be a civil war. Goto's plan was successful to the point of returning political authority, but thereafter the situation did not develop as he had planned. Goto was far too optimistic.⁴⁹⁸ Goto had persisted with ideological thinking and, as a result, there were important points which it would be impossible to realise.

One major issue was the actual method of returning political authority. Although Tokugawa Yoshinobu did return authority based on Goto's petition, he did not abolish feudalism.⁴⁹⁹ That meant his action was nominal, and, in reality, Tokugawa Yoshinobu retained his huge lands and noble status for the purpose of becoming political leader in the new regime. In fact, considering the economic and military power provided by his lands, he could be the only future political leader because nobody could effectively challenge him. In the meantime, the Imperial Court itself could not implement Goto's plan. It had been isolated for hundreds of years under the

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid., 272.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid., 177-179.

Tokugawa regime and, furthermore, only a limited number of noble houses had been eligible to be Court nobles for 800 years.⁵⁰⁰ That meant the Imperial Court had neither the know-how to conduct politics nor could provide able nobles. For the Imperial Court, Tokugawa Yoshinobu's political decision was welcomed, but in reality the Court could not create a new political structure. As a result, they would be forced to accept that in the end only Tokugawa Yoshinobu could lead any new regime.

It was said that Tokugawa Yoshinobu had predicted this after analyzing the political quality of the Imperial Court, which was why he agreed to *Taisei-Houkan*. In fact, when interviewed in 1909, he admitted that when he took a look at Goto's petition, he thought the time for promoting his will had finally come.⁵⁰¹ Subsequently, it has been considered that Tokugawa Yoshinobu had pondered founding a Two House system of Parliament, whereby Court nobles and feudal lords would be members of the Upper House with all their retainers in the Lower House, and he saw himself as chairman of the Upper House.⁵⁰² Also, he was said to have felt the need to found a centralized state by adopting the British style, for which purpose he was supposedly willing to abolish feudalism.⁵⁰³ Nevertheless, in the book *Sekimukaihikki* which ran all the interviews with Tokugawa Yoshinobu, he

⁵⁰⁰ Hidenao Takahashi, *Bakumatsu Ishin no Seiji to Tenno* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Koubunkan, 2007), 142.

⁵⁰¹ Shibusawa (ed.), *Sekimukaihikki*, 17.

⁵⁰² Takahashi., 381.

⁵⁰³ Suguru Sakaki, *Bakumatsu Seiji to Satsuma Han* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Koubunkan, 2004), 435.

never mentioned the above plans so it is impossible to determine whether they were true or not.

Goto's petition, ideologically correct but flawed in reality, was probably formed in such a way that Tokugawa Yoshinobu could accept it without resistance. However, at this point the attitude of Satsuma was critical. They had already seen through the intention of Tokugawa Yoshinobu regarding the next stage. The samurais of Satsuma had favoured *Taisei-Houkan* which was why they had supported his initial action. In fact, without their co-operation, Tokugawa Yoshinobu could not have returned his political authority so smoothly.⁵⁰⁴ But equally they opposed some provisions of *Taisei-Houkan* because, if operated as Tokugawa Yoshinobu planned, he would still be the leading figure in Japan. Hence, after he had returned his political authority, the samurais of Satsuma insisted that he also return his noble status and feudal lands to the Imperial Court.⁵⁰⁵ With the failure of this negotiation, the civil war started in 1868. Tokugawa Yoshinobu would not yield on the above two points.

Tosa and Satsuma shared the same political ideology, which was why they made their alliance in the 3rd year of Keio (1867). In September of the same year, however, it was cancelled.⁵⁰⁶ Tosa and Satsuma could easily agree with the necessity of *Taisei-Houkan* for modernization, but not over the details. In October 1867 Tokugawa Yoshinobu enacted *Taisei-Houkan*

⁵⁰⁴ Takahashi, 24.

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid., 428.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid., 371.

based on Tosa's plan.⁵⁰⁷ As a result, the samurais of Satsuma decided on civil war. This split became the main reason why the samurais of Tosa could not subsequently hold major positions in the Meiji Government.

The huge disadvantage arising from *Taisei-Houkan* for Tokugawa Yoshinobu was not necessarily to give up the status of Shogun but to abolish feudalism. The relationship of master and man between Tokugawa Yoshinobu and the other feudal lords would thereby be cancelled.⁵⁰⁸ Tokugawa Yoshinobu had focused on the advantage of *Taisei-Houkan*. According to Goto's petition, there was no reference to the administrative system under any new regime, which meant that, although the Tycoon's Government was abolished, it was apparent that no new regime could establish a nation-wide administrative system except by using either the ex-government system or Tokugawa's support.⁵⁰⁹ Tokugawa Yoshinobu knew that, as did some of the major feudal lords, including Tosa, who supported him because he was considered to possess the required leadership.

In consequence, the samurais of Satsuma decided to abolish feudalism not by a peaceful method but now by civil war. Thus, they started to strengthen their relationship with Choshu which had been fumbling around for a way of founding a new regime without Tokugawa. In February of the 2nd year of Keio, they had already made a pact for the purpose of supporting Choshu to fight against the Tycoon's Government. This time, they expanded on the purpose of their pact. In fact, in Article XI, they agreed that Satsuma

⁵⁰⁷ Sakaki, 330.

⁵⁰⁸ Takahashi, 383.

⁵⁰⁹ Isao Inoue, 286.

and Choshu should make a combined effort to restore the authority of the imperial state.⁵¹⁰ It was therefore for the purpose of excluding Tokugawa Yoshinobu from any new regime that they made this alliance in 1866. This pact would have two significant historical consequences. First, the emergence of a new power which would not hesitate to fight a civil war and, secondly, that they would eventually become the majority in the Meiji Government.

Goto's petition contained another significant problem. Even though his new regime would establish a parliament, it would still be based on feudalism. As a result, even if all the feudal lords and their retainers attended the parliament, they would not embrace national politics because they were foremost the representatives of their own fiefs.⁵¹¹ That caveat was critical, since it meant that they would never promote centralization. As long as feudal lands remained, each feudal lord and his retainers would possess political influence there, and political decisions by the central government could not be enacted or enforced. Central government might expect notional obedience from all the feudal lords, but such obedience would inevitably be seen as interference in their domestic affairs because all feudal lords were independent. By keeping the feudal lords, parliamentary politics could not develop. Whatever the situation, feudalism and centralization were incompatible. A major criticism of Goto is therefore that he conceded the survival of feudal status.

⁵¹⁰ Sakaki, 325-331.

⁵¹¹ Isao Inoue, 177-179.

Perhaps Tokugawa Yoshinobu, Goto Shojiro and his master, Yamauchi Youdou, could not envisage a society without that feudalistic element. That tendency could be seen not only among them but also among other Japanese. In fact, the ex-feudal lord of Echizen (modern Fukui), Matsudaira Shungaku, who was later recognized as one of four good feudal lords, also delivered a proposal to Tokugawa Yoshinobu on 13 August of 2nd year of Keio (1866) in which he advocated a reform of the Tycoon's Government but one still based on maintaining feudalism.⁵¹² That attitude could be seen as Satow's opinion too, because he proposed the Confederate Daimios. However these men envisaged a new regime, the essence of feudalism remained, whether it was proposed by the Japanese or the British. The Japanese were only able to establish a constitutional monarchy in 1890 because they could all finally abolish the model of feudalism from their minds.

Another overly optimistic point in Goto's plan was that, although a parliament would be founded, there was no realistic administrative organization which could implement political decisions.⁵¹³ A new regime could therefore neither promote national policy nor punish violators. If that was the reality then it could not really be defined as a political regime. In Goto's new regime, feudal territories could be the only administrative organization.⁵¹⁴ Therefore, success in creating national politics depended entirely on whether all the feudal lords would follow the lead of parliament.

⁵¹² Sakaki, 342.

⁵¹³ Isao Inoue, 177-179.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid., 179-180.

Of course, even under the Tokugawa Shogunate, a similar problem had already occurred surrounding the bombardments of Kagoshima in 1863 and Shimonoseki in 1864. If both Satsuma and Choshu had obeyed the Tycoon's Government, those incidents would not have happened. Furthermore, the Japanese had already founded a conference, similar to Goto's plan. This was the conference of *San-yo* (which means counsellor) in 1863 and the conference of *Shi-ko* (which means four feudal lords) in 1867. The participants of the former were Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu, the guardian of 14th Tycoon Tokugawa Iemochi at that time, Matsudaira Katamori of Aizu (modern Fukushima), who was the main supporter of the Tycoon's Government, Shimazu Hisamitsu, the father of the feudal lord of Satsuma, Matsudaira Shungaku, ex-feudal lord of Echizen, Yamauchi Youdou, ex-feudal lord of Tosa, and Date Munenari, the ex-feudal lord of Uwajima. The participants of the latter were mostly the same, except that Matsudaira Katamori did not attend. These conferences could be regarded as Confederate Daimios, such as Satow proposed. So, what had happened at those conferences? They collapsed in a short period because, in each case, Hitotsubashi (Tokugawa) Yoshinobu could not agree with the other feudal lords about making political decisions, and as a result the conferences became meaningless. These historical events demonstrated the weakness of Goto's plan. Because social status was still based on feudalism, only the Tycoon could bring together the major feudal lords. Unfortunately, because the dignity of the Tycoon had already declined, whatever the situation there was no method of creating a new regime as long as feudalism existed. Every

feudal lord possessed independent political and military power, and now there was nobody above them. The only authority was the Mikado, but the Mikado had only a remote existence and so could not be their direct leader. The Japanese did not have the notion of an imperial army under the Court. There were soldiers who guarded the nine gates of the Imperial Court at Kyoto, but they were only samurais who had been sent by their feudal lords.⁵¹⁵ Their role was to protect the gates and, whatever happened in Japan, they would not react. That meant there was no leader for a new regime.

Also, in terms of military affairs, there was naivety in Goto's plan. For Goto, a national army should exist for the purpose of maintaining uniformity in domestic affairs.⁵¹⁶ But for the samurais of Satsuma and Choshu, a national army should exist to further their plans.⁵¹⁷ They did not share the same political values, which was why Satsuma had opposed *Taisei-Houkan* after Tokugawa Yoshinobu had accepted Tosa's idea and not Satsuma's.

After the battle of Toba-Fushimi in 1868, the samurais of Satsuma and Choshu, and also the Court nobles who were on their side, founded the new regime of the Emperor Meiji (1852-1912). Only then did *Osei-Fukko* occur. *Osei-Fukko* means, ideologically, to restore the imperial authority of the ancient era, and the new regime was based on that principle. But the essence

⁵¹⁵ Isao Inoue, 325.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid., 183.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid., 183.

of the new regime changed from that which had been planned before the battle. The comparative details were as follows:⁵¹⁸

The discipline of political organization in the new regime

Before: An organization which would make an effort to reach national decisions by debate.

After: An organization to protect the victor's political power by laws.

The elements to form the new regime

Before: To maintain the existence of the Imperial Court, the Tycoon's Government and feudal lords.

After: Everything above was abolished.

About the Tycoon's Government

Before: The Tokugawa family would remain and the chairman of the new regime would be the head of their family.

After: Not only their social status, but also their noble status and their feudal lands were cancelled.

About the Imperial Court

Before: Reform, based on maintaining traditional customs, status and sense of values.

⁵¹⁸ Isao Inoue, 277-280.

After: Except for the Emperor Meiji, everything was cancelled.

The members of the new regime

Before: All the feudal lords and retainers had an eligibility to join.

After: The samurais of Satsuma and Choshu became the majority and the rest were the people who had sided with them.

Before the battle of Toba-Fushimi, then, for the purpose of avoiding civil war, all Japanese were deemed eligible to join the new regime and all existing organizational structures were to be preserved. However, after the battle, because Satsuma and Choshu were victorious, they took the political initiative and, as a result, Owari, Echizen, Tosa and Uwajima, which were also major feudal powers, could no longer form a part of the majority. Having made efforts to avoid the war, they did not share the values of Satsuma and Choshu. Now they had to obey Satsuma and Choshu in the new regime. The Tokugawa family was abolished. The civil war continued until 1869, but at the battle of Toba-Fushimi Japan's future was effectively decided.

When discussing *Osei-Fukko*, one further point requires attention. It is that Iwakura Tomomi (1825-83), who became a leader of the Imperial Court, declared the restoration of the era of Emperor Jinmu.⁵¹⁹ Emperor Jinmu was the first Mikado of Japan, albeit confirmed only in legend. Why did Iwakura declare the era of Emperor Jinmu? It was because of its ideological significance. When the Tycoon's Government decided to open ports to the

⁵¹⁹ Ibid., 338-339.

Westerners, they justified it according to a political rationale going back to the seventeenth century. The seventeenth century was when the Tokugawa Shogunate had closed off the state. Thus, for the purpose of maintaining the dignity of the Tokugawa Shogunate, they had to proclaim that everything would revert to the situation before closing the state. However, the samurais who swore loyalty to the Mikado insisted that everything should return to the twelfth century.⁵²⁰ That was when the warriors founded their regime by isolating the Mikado. These ideals symbolized the dispute over whether the essence of the Tokugawa Shogunate or of the traditional Imperial Court system would be preserved. But if there was any ideological trace at all from the Middle Ages, then surely it seemed impossible to found a modern state? Iwakura resolved this problem by stressing the existence of the Emperor Jinmu for the purpose of denying both; otherwise, vested interests would remain. To deny both traditions from earlier ages, the Imperial Court had to make that declaration. After the battle it was apparent that the Imperial Court had achieved victory, but the Japanese were (and remain) people who always emphasise ideology. For that purpose, *Osei-Fukko* was important; it was not just to announce the Court's triumph but to provide a milestone for the future. Nevertheless, although that was one background to the Meiji Restoration, the samurais who supported the restoration of Imperial authority could not establish the modern state immediately. The following assessment gives a good account of the situation:

Ten years before the Meiji Restoration the emperor had become

⁵²⁰ Ibid., 335-336.

a political figure, but there was still much to be accomplished before Japanese political society could regard him unequivocally as the ultimate power in the effective government.⁵²¹

This statement indeed captures the idea that the purpose of the Meiji Restoration was not simply to restore the national status of the Mikado.

When analyzing the political developments of the Meiji Restoration era, one phrase always appears: imperial ratification. Judged from the view point of the modern state, any treaty without imperial ratification would be meaningless and, as a result, its articles would not be effective. In *Eikoku Sakuron*, Satow criticized the Tycoon's Government because it made the treaty with the British in 1858 without imperial ratification, and thereby, caused commercial difficulties. That was why, in 1865, under the British, foreign fleets off Hyogo demanded from the Tycoon's Government imperial ratification for the 1858 treaty, otherwise they would negotiate with the Imperial Court directly.

When considering that event, one aspect is interesting: the Japanese themselves actually criticised Ii Naosuke, who was *Tairo* of the Tycoon's Government, for making commercial treaties without imperial ratification. However, in contrast to Parkes's action with the fleets in 1865, there was no large protest movement, which suggests that although the Japanese had worshipped and respected the Mikado since ancient times, they did not feel it so serious to ignore the Mikado's existence in the diplomatic field. After the

⁵²¹ Webb, 246-247.

publication of *Eikoku Sakuron* in 1866 the Japanese started to contemplate a new regime where the Mikado would head its hierarchy, but until then no Japanese realistically considered such a change, which was why they did not attach much importance to imperial ratification. Because the Mikado had been so long excluded from national politics, the Japanese still accepted the Tycoon as national sovereign both in a nominal and practical sense. Hence, when negotiating with the Europeans, no Japanese doubted that the Tycoon's Government was in charge.

The 15th Tycoon, Tokugawa Yoshinobu, recalled his experience when later interviewed. He had explained to the Westerners that Japan was governed by the Shogun and that he was in charge of national politics, but however much he tried to help the Westerners understand that, they had never grasped it.⁵²² His statement illustrated the significant difference between the Japanese and the Westerners over the existence of the Emperor. For the Westerners, Japanese attitudes seemed strange, since they did not understand the concept of the Mikado in the first place. For them, the Tycoon was merely the deputy of the Mikado, so even though he could negotiate with the Westerners, he did not have the right to sign. The reality was that although the Japanese did define the Mikado as the symbol of national identity, that was done only in any significant measure after the foundation of the Meiji Government. Until then, even though the Japanese did begin to emphasise the existence of the Mikado, they did not actively promote the Mikado as the symbol of national identity. That ambiguity was reflected at

⁵²² Shibusawa (ed.), *Sekimukaihikki*, 109.

the time of and after making the 1858 Treaty. Although the feudal lords criticised Ii Naosuke for signing it without imperial ratification, that did not mean those feudal lords concerned themselves with the importance of the Mikado. They mentioned the Mikado only for the purpose of accusing Ii Naosuke.⁵²³ Thus, the reason why the Japanese started to take an interest in the need for imperial ratification was to attack the Tycoon and his Government, not to stress the political status of the Mikado.

After the foundation of the Meiji Government, indeed until 1945, Emperors were considered to have a sacred existence, and, based on that concept, the political circumstances surrounding the Meiji Restoration were consistently analysed and discussed. As a result, later and present Japanese concluded that to understand the importance of imperial ratification was to understand the first step towards Japanese modernization. However, that is not correct, and after 1945, with guaranteed freedom of speech, Japanese scholars, free from this taboo, could analyse the political circumstance of the Meiji Restoration era more openly.⁵²⁴

As a result, one great truth has emerged: in 1858 no Japanese considered that treaties without the imperial ratification were illegal and, furthermore, the Emperor Komei was not enraged following the Tycoon's action. The traditional historical account is this: in February 1858 the Tycoon's Government decided to open the ports for commerce, but for the

⁵²³ Masao Ono, *Bakuhatsu Kenryoku Kaitaikatei no Kenkyu* (Tokyo: Koukura Shobo, 1993), 116.

⁵²⁴ Tadamasa Aoyama, *Meiji Ishin to Kokka Keisei* (Tokyo, Yoshikawa Koubunsha, 2000), 16.

purpose of suppressing any opposition from other feudal lords, they decided to ask the Court for imperial ratification. In March 1858 the Emperor Komei refused to give imperial ratification for the treaty. Meanwhile, the American envoy, Townsend Harris, stressed the current activities of British and French naval forces in China and urged the government to sign his commercial treaty before they arrived in Japan. As a result, Ii Naosuke signed the commercial treaty with the US, without imperial ratification, which was why the Tycoon's Government started to be criticized by the Imperial Court and by radical Japanese. This series of historical events is what the Japanese have since accepted as a historical truth. Yet that was because the Meiji Government so elevated the position of the Emperor. In recent years, a new understanding has emerged.

One basis for this new understanding emerged from Tokugawa Yoshinobu's answers in his interview in 1911. He said that since the Tycoon's Government had been in charge of politics, they should have stated publicly that the state would have to be opened. Then, after everything had been completed, they should simply have reported to the Imperial Court.⁵²⁵ Also, Tanabe Taichi, the Japanese historian, and also an eye-witness, insisted that there was no reason to involve the Mikado, otherwise the situation would have become more complicated.⁵²⁶ Their statements proved one essential matter: that the Japanese at that time did not recognize the vital role of the Mikado, compared with the era of the Meiji Government. In short, the

⁵²⁵ Shibusawa (ed.), *Sekimukaihikki*, 264.

⁵²⁶ Tanabe, *Bakumatsu Gaikoudan*, Vol. I, 10.

Japanese under the Tokugawa Shogunate did not attach importance to imperial ratification in the diplomatic field.

This attitude of not considering the need for imperial ratification obviously caused a diplomatic problem with the foreigners, but it proved at least that the Japanese at that time did not emphasize the status of the Mikado. Tokugawa Yoshinobu, whose name at that time was Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu, Tokugawa Nariaki, who was the father of Yoshinobu and a lord of Mito, Tokugawa Yoshikumi, who was a lord of Owari, and Matsudaira Yoshinaga, who was a lord of Echizen, all accused Ii Naosuke of concluding the 1858 treaty without imperial ratification, but that was only an excuse for attacking him.⁵²⁷ The truth was that they had been struggling among themselves about who would be the 14th Tycoon. They were concerned about that matter, not with imperial ratification.⁵²⁸ In fact, when Ii told them that his action was inevitable to keep up with international affairs, their dispute about it was ended by that simple statement.⁵²⁹

Accepted history gives the reason why the Emperor Komei refused to issue the imperial ratification as his fear of Japanese soil being violated by foreigners. However, that understanding has now changed. The Emperor Komei objected not to opening the ports but acted to prevent the possibility of a collapsing domestic order.⁵³⁰ The Emperor Komei would not have rejected ratification if domestic order could be maintained as it had been

⁵²⁷ Ono, 116.

⁵²⁸ Tanabe, *Bakumatsu Gaikoudan*, Vol I, 98.

⁵²⁹ Ibid., 99.

⁵³⁰ Aoyama, *Meiji Ishin to Kokka Keisei*, 36.

before.⁵³¹ The concept of domestic order was similar to that which the Chinese possessed as integral to their national identity. Admittedly, when the Westerners arrived, ordinary Japanese saw this as the barbarians' arrival. Yet although the Japanese defined foreigners as barbarians, they had not closed all international relations. Even in the seventeenth century, when the Tycoon's Government had closed the state, they still allowed limited trade with the Dutch and Chinese at Nagasaki. Also, the Japanese had diplomatic relations with the Ryukyu and Korean dynasties. The latter relationships were described as *Communication*, but as translated from nineteenth-century Japanese, the true meaning was *Tributary state*, which meant the people of Ryukyu and Korea were allowed to have diplomatic relations in return for their payment of tribute.⁵³² Since the Dutch and Chinese did not pay tribute, they were not allowed diplomatic relations, which was why they were confined to Nagasaki under close surveillance.

⁵³¹ The political vision of the Emperor Komei was to maintain the Tycoon's Government while also maintaining the standing of the Imperial Court in the national hierarchy. In supporting the Tycoon's Government, the Emperor Komei sanctioned the promotion of *Jyoi* towards the Western states. On that point, Emperor Komei never considered or wished the collapse of the Tycoon's Government. Whatever the situation, the Emperor Komei wanted to preserve the feudal structure, as did the Tycoon, with the feudal lords and the samurais. (Ki-jae Shim, *Nitcho Gaikoushi no Kenkyu* (Kyoto: Rinkawa Shoten, 1997), 7).

⁵³² However, this analysis was adopted by the Tycoon's Government for the purpose of asserting Japan's national standing in East Asia. The states which had diplomatic relations with Japan, such as Ryukyu, China, the Netherlands and Korea, however, had different points of view. (Aoyama, *Meiji Ishin no Gengo to Shiryō*, 195). The South Korean historian, Ki-Jae Shim, has claimed that the Japanese-Korean diplomatic relationship existed on the basis of equal status. (Shim, 6). Even so, Shim described the diplomatic relationship with the Netherlands and China as *Tsusho*, while that with Ryukyu and Korea as *Tsushin*, before the Westerners advanced into East Asia. (Shim, 7).

Foreigners who rejected both these types of relationship were liable to be expelled from Japan. In conclusion, it was the Tycoon's Government which defined *Trade relations without diplomatic relations* as *Tsusho*, and only *Diplomatic relations* as *Tsushin*. The intention was to hold a psychological advantage over other Asian states, consistent with traditional Japanese ideology. It thereby reinforced the sacredness of Japan's national identity⁵³³ whereby its lands were defined as the most divine in the world. Such a view clearly necessitated such a diplomatic distinction. In fact, in 1621 the Japanese ended their diplomatic relations with China because the diplomacy was based on Sino centrism.⁵³⁴ However, to withdraw from Sino centrism, which was the predominant diplomatic system in East Asia, did not mean that Japan was completely isolated. The Japanese established their own version of Sino centrism.⁵³⁵ In the present, Sino centrism is defined as follows:

By claiming to be the 'centre' of the social order, the challenger is merely taking over China's role in 'promoting cosmic and social harmony', while the 'moral purpose of the state' remains the same.⁵³⁶

And for the purpose of achieving and maintaining the above essence, the Japanese had to define their own diplomatic system strictly, especially

⁵³³ Toby, 213.

⁵³⁴ Ibid., 227.

⁵³⁵ Ibid., 170.

⁵³⁶ Shogo Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire—China and Japan's Encounter with European International Society* (London: Routledge, 2009), 45.

towards Korea.⁵³⁷ The following statement illustrates the background to this Japanese attitude:

From the Japanese end, that order would be constructed on the premise of Japanese centrality, of complete autonomy to control Japan's external affairs.⁵³⁸

The Japanese version of Sino centrism therefore required strict definitions of both *Tsushin* and *Tsusho* which were successfully maintained until the arrival of the Westerners. In fact, Shim concluded that the 1860s was the time when relations based on *Tsushin* and *Tsusho* collapsed and Japan was forced to shift to a new diplomatic relationship with the Westerners.⁵³⁹

In 1853, Perry indeed rejected both. He requested free trade, but the Japanese did not understand that concept. This meant that the Americans and Japanese could not even start negotiations because their concepts of diplomacy were so different. The Tycoon's Government feared that once they admitted Perry's request, traditional domestic order would collapse in a short period. Perry and the Tycoon's Government could not therefore achieve any agreement; they made a treaty of peace, amity and friendship only in 1854. That was the product of compromise by both sides. The Tycoon's Government agreed to provide food and water for the Americans and opened ports of call for them. In return, Perry gave up the idea of free trade. For the Americans, and also for the British, French, Dutch and Russians, who made the same treaty with the Tycoon's Government in 1854, that treaty was the

⁵³⁷ Toby., 215.

⁵³⁸ Ibid., 219.

⁵³⁹ Shim, *Nitcho Gaikokushi no Kenkyu*, 7.

first step for establishing diplomacy. They all considered that for the purpose of establishing friendly relations, they had made treaties with the Japanese. However, the Japanese did not think like that. They had a different point of view from the Westerners.

After the Meiji Restoration, it became accepted wisdom that these early treaties of peace, amity and friendship were the beginning of a process whereby the Tycoon's Government would cause a political disaster leading to Japan being colonised by Western states. However, that fear was really caused only by the later treaty of 1858 which acknowledged extraterritoriality, introduced a low rate of tariff and a most-favoured-nation clause for the Europeans. In fact, Tanabe Taichi defined Perry's treaty as being based on universal laws.⁵⁴⁰ Therefore, it is now hard to accept the Meiji Government assertion that Japan was in danger of colonisation from 1854.

Historical facts may support that. When the Tycoon's Government signed the treaties of peace, amity and friendship with the West, the Emperor Komei did not issue any imperial ratification. Nor did the Tycoon's Government request it from the Imperial Court. That was because domestic order would not be challenged by those treaties. For the Japanese, although they had opened the ports, that was not for any commercial purpose. It was just for cases of emergency; hence there was no possibility of causing a political disaster. That was why the Emperor Komei expressed honestly a

⁵⁴⁰ Tanabe, *Bakumatsu Gaikoudan*, Vol I, 8.

feeling of satisfaction.⁵⁴¹ Although the treaty with Perry was the first time the Japanese had made a treaty according to modern diplomatic concepts, no Japanese questioned the need for imperial ratification and not even the Mikado considered it to be illegal.

What was the meaning for the Japanese, of *peace, amity and friendship*? For them, those treaties were certainly not to establish diplomatic relations. In short, they made those treaties for the purpose of gaining time to promote *Jyoi* to expel the barbarians.⁵⁴² Their main consideration was to maintain domestic order. After Perry, the Westerners refused to establish diplomatic contacts based on Japanese values, which meant they refused both *communicate* and *commercial* relations. The Westerners would not admit the formal classifications which the Tycoon's Government had established as the conditions for official diplomatic relations. As a result, their existence came to represent a serious threat to the domestic order. The Japanese had to resist them; otherwise, neither the Tycoon's Government nor the Imperial Court would maintain their standing and both would be endangered. From the Western point of view, this attitude doubtless looked strange, but for the Japanese the foreigners had either to obey the Japanese order or leave. Therefore, with a view to expelling the foreigners, the Tycoon's Government made treaties of peace, amity and friendship as an act of appeasement, later to wage war against them to restore the traditional order. Since the Emperor Komei could understand that intention, the Imperial Court did not question the Government's

⁵⁴¹ Aoyama, *Meiji Ishin to Kokka Keisei*, 34.

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*, 34.

actions. Only when Ii Naosuke made the treaty with Townsend Harris in 1858 did the Emperor Komei criticise his action — but not because Ii had signed without imperial ratification. The Emperor Komei was afraid of a collapse of domestic order on account of its specific terms. The Emperor Komei did not care who had authority as national sovereign. Thereafter the major feudal lords criticised Ii for the purpose of encouraging the samurais and citizens to understand a national crisis, and they raised the issue of imperial ratification. And under the Meiji Government, the Japanese severely criticised Ii, and also the Tycoon's Government for pretending to be the national sovereign. Concluding treaties without Imperial ratification was cited as proof of it. However, the truth is that Japanese at the time focused on traditional order and identity, and did not regard imperial ratification to be as important as did those who came after the Meiji Restoration.

Traditional history also asserts that Ii Naosuke signed the 1858 treaty without imperial ratification because he understood Western military superiority. He was said to be afraid of wasting any time either in negotiations or by receiving imperial ratification. However an alternative analysis has recently emerged. According to this, Ii signed without enough knowledge about the opening of Japanese ports for commerce.⁵⁴³ Although he had signed a commercial treaty, he believed the situation would be the same as after the Government had signed the treaties of peace, amity and

⁵⁴³ Aoyama, *Meiji Ishin to Kokka Keisei*, 45.

friendship.⁵⁴⁴ That analysis is plausible, because right after Ii had made the commercial treaties with the Western states, he instituted a severe political repression in 1858-59 known as the *Purge of Ansei*. His oppression was, in fact, too severe; not only feudal lords but also samurais were punished. In the meantime, he also punished the Court nobles. The Court was under the Mikado's control, but Ii could still pursue his measures against them because the Emperor Komei supported him.⁵⁴⁵ The Court nobles who were punished were the people who had expected free trade.⁵⁴⁶ The Emperor Komei had to punish them otherwise order would disappear within the Imperial Court.

Not only did the Emperor Komei cooperate with *the Purge of Ansei*. In March 1862 the Mikado's sister, Princess Kazunomiya, was allowed to marry the 14th Tycoon, Tokugawa Iemochi. By these means the Emperor Komei was trying to become closer to the Tycoon's Government in order to recover traditional order, just as the Tycoon's Government looked to the past for traditional identity. The Emperor Komei even ordered Tokugawa Iemochi to visit Kyoto in 1863 and officially instructed him to promote *Jyoi*. The Emperor Komei made these decisions based on one principle: to restore the traditional order which was now endangered by the 1858 commercial treaties. By analyzing the Mikado's actions according to that idea, every historical incident becomes clearer. In the meantime, the Tycoon's Government was losing any clear vision in either domestic politics or diplomacy. In each case, it changed its approach in the years which followed

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid., 39.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid., 45.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid., 38.

yet did not solve any essential problem. That was why it increasingly lost credibility in the eyes of both the Japanese and the Westerners, and the origin of this was the fact that it had made commercial treaties with Western states without a proper understanding. Imperial ratification itself was not at the heart of the problem.

The commercial treaties which the Tycoon's Government had signed for the purpose of suiting the occasion were now causing severe problems of domestic order for the Tycoon's Government. As a result of entering into the international free trade system, the domestic market system of the Shogunate was collapsing, the status of the Tycoon was declining, and the military system of the Tokugawa Shogunate was weakened.⁵⁴⁷ This was because the Tycoon's Government could not devise any means to connect local markets with Osaka, which was at the centre of the Japanese economy, because the Japanese started to doubt the Tycoon's competence after a series of mismanagements in domestic politics and diplomacy, and because, after the commercial treaties, contradictions in social status in Japan started to appear. Yet with *the Purge of Ansei*, much opposition to the Tycoon's Government had been eliminated and it could still insist that it was the sovereign body in Japan despite its mistakes in both domestic and diplomatic affairs.

In November 1865, after the foreign naval display to demand ratification for the 1858 treaty, the Court finally issued an imperial ratification. This had significance for both Westerners and the Japanese.

⁵⁴⁷ Ono, 34.

From the Western point of view, under universal laws, the true national sovereign had accepted the treaties, so all articles could now be effective for promoting international trade. Their activities in Japan thereby became legal. For the Japanese, however, the fact that the Emperor Komei issued his imperial ratification meant an end to their traditional identity. The idea of defining Japanese soil as sacred and foreigners as barbarians was diminished, because the traditional order had ended. As a result of issuing the imperial ratification, the Mikado acknowledged the existence of the foreigners in Japan, hence the Japanese had now to give up the idea of *Jyoi*.⁵⁴⁸ The Japanese could no longer regard foreign states as either *communicate* or *commercial*.

In conclusion, then, before the Meiji Restoration, the idea of imperial ratification in itself did not have any psychological impact for the Japanese; criticism arose later for the purpose of discrediting the Tycoon's Government, especially by the Meiji regime. Raising and debating such complex political ideologies was never likely to agitate citizens to participate in a mass movement. Because of feudalism, few Japanese could even make the decision to join in political affairs. Everybody had their defined social place under the Tokugawa Shogunate, and to join any anti-establishment movement meant losing their status. However, because, imperial ratification was the Mikado's business, and all Japanese shared a reverence for the view of the Mikado, to criticise the Tycoon's Government on behalf of the Mikado was a powerful idea. Despite that, no Japanese before 1868 attached much importance to

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid., 230.

imperial ratification even when they understood the notion of imperial authority, any more than they could understand the essential points of universal laws. New ideas about the Mikado were formed after the Meiji Government took power, and have influenced Japanese thinking ever since. Since the Middle Ages, the Mikado and the Imperial Court had been abandoned, so the arrival of the Westerners could scarcely in itself bring about a revival of imperial authority. Therefore, although Satow was emphasizing the ideological importance of the 1865 imperial ratification in *Eikoku Sakuron*, the Japanese would scarcely have understood his meaning. They might, however, better appreciate the existence and value of the Mikado from those 1866 essays.

Next, British diplomatic relations during the civil war in 1867-69 must be analysed. By doing so, it will be shown how Japanese historiography interpreted British diplomacy in order to justify the subsequent Meiji Restoration.

Chapter IX: British diplomacy during the civil war, 1867-1869

The civil war, called the *Boshin War* in Japan, started on 27 January 1868 when the army of the ex-Tycoon's Government fought that from Satsuma-Choshu at Toba-Fushimi. It continued until 27 June 1869 when the residue of the ex-Tycoon's forces surrendered at Hakodate. The war was a struggle between the Imperial Court and the ex-Tycoon's regime, even

though both sides had already agreed to construct a modern state over which the Mikado would be national sovereign. However, the Imperial Court side, and especially Satsuma, wished to exclude the personnel of the Tycoon's Government from the new regime and refused to allow the last Tycoon, Tokugawa Yoshinobu, to join. That was not acceptable to the ex-Tycoon's supporters.

The origin of this civil conflict was the arrangement whereby Tokugawa Yoshinobu had returned his political power and authority to the Imperial Court on 9 November 1867, after which radical Satsuma samurais had demanded that he also return his noble status and all feudal lands. The Government side then stiffened its political stance. In the meantime, to provoke the ex-Tycoon's Government, Satsuma samurais committed several outrages in Edo. Following these actions, civil war could not be avoided. The ex-Government, whose military force mainly consisted of Aizu and Kuwana, moved towards Kyoto and against the military force of the Imperial Court defending Toba and Fushimi.

The general understanding of the war is that the ex-Government tried to crush the forces of Satsuma-Choshu, but that when the latter proved well trained and possessed modern weapons the ex-Government force gave up advancing to Kyoto. In recognition of this, the Imperial Court officially gave the imperial flag to the Satsuma and Choshu side. This effectively decided the general nature of the civil war, because Satsuma and Choshu assumed a legitimacy and whoever fought against them would be defined as an enemy of the state. As a result, the feudal lords who maintained neutrality or those

who were initially on the side of the ex-Government soon shifted their support to the Imperial Court. Three days later, Tokugawa Yoshinobu was officially declared an enemy of the state. To try to avoid that situation, he left Osaka the day before and as a result the military situation became worse for the ex-Government because its supreme commander had fled and the morale of his army collapsed. The Imperial Court side, which already controlled western Japan completely, then moved towards the east, reaching Edo in March 1868. By that time, the radical Satsuma samurais had already decided on a full attack on Edo castle, but, after negotiation with the ex-Government, Edo castle was opened peacefully on 3 May. Tokugawa Yoshinobu was spared his life but forced to retire to Mito, his birth place. The Tycoon's Government thereby disappeared both in name and in reality. However, the remaining military force of the ex-Government refused to surrender and still resisted the Imperial Court. That was Aizu and the forces at Hakodate, but they were defeated soon after. As a result, the civil war was over in a year and a half.

When Japanese today are asked about the diplomacy of Western states at that time almost all will answer that the British supported the Imperial Court while the French supported the Tycoon's Government and that the *Boshin war* was a proxy war between them, as if a form of colonial war occurred in the Far East. This is the orthodox historical view and there is a tendency not to question it. But if proof is required then this academic argument is at once weakened because it mostly relies on secondary sources and discussion after the events. Even if British support for the Imperial

Court is considered to have existed, the evidence for it was too vague. Frequently cited evidence is Satow's diary of 22 March 1868. In it, he wrote that Iwakura Tomomi told him that Iwakura understood Britain's decision because the British were the first to acknowledge the Mikado as the national sovereign of Japan.⁵⁴⁹ Judging from only this statement, it could be surmised that the British had been supporting the Mikado from an early period. The orthodox historical view assumes that the Japanese were in danger of colonisation by Western states because of the political failures of the Tycoon's Government but that thanks to a great effort by the Imperial Court, and also Satsuma and Choshu, the Japanese were saved. The Meiji Restoration has long been analysed and discussed in this context and, as a result, Ernest Satow has become misunderstood. Some historians even accuse him of instigating the Japanese civil war. Of course, there is no evidence for such an assertion. In reality, did the British really support the Imperial Court? And did they want to create a puppet regime by interfering in Japanese domestic affairs? In this chapter, traditional Japanese assumptions which have become academic orthodoxy will be discussed.

First of all, why did the Japanese define the *Boshin war* as the critical moment regarding colonisation? The Japanese historian, Fukuchi Gen'ichiro, who had experience working under the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Tycoon's Government as a translator, worked as a journalist in the Meiji era, and later became a major figure in Japanese historiography,

⁵⁴⁹ PRO30/33/15/2, Satow Diary, 22 March 1868.

wrote that the principal fear at that time had been interference by foreign states. In fact, in the Government, there were strong advocates of requesting French support for the purpose of counter-attacking Satsuma and Choshu. However, had this opinion prevailed, the Japanese would regret it forever,⁵⁵⁰ since if the Japanese asked help from foreigners they would not be independent even after the war because, by so doing, the Japanese would have abandoned reconstructing their own state. Government samurais who wanted French support thereby endangered Japan. Fukuchi was an eye-witness of the Restoration, so from his statement emerged the idea in scholarship that the Tycoon's Government had asked help from the French and were somehow supported by them.

Also Osatake Takeki (1880-1946), who was a jurist under the Meiji regime, said much the same in a speech on 3 December 1928: that had the Japanese invited support from the British and French there might have been significant repercussions for Japan's future.⁵⁵¹ By implication, at the time of the civil war there were some Japanese who had been nervous about interference by foreign states.

These two sources testified that there were advocates of asking help from the foreigners. In reality, though, foreign involvement never happened; neither can their statements be taken as evidence of any real danger. They simply pointed out some opinions, and their statements are not evidence of any likelihood of foreign intervention.

⁵⁵⁰ Fukuchi, 256.

⁵⁵¹ Takeki Osatake, *Bakumatsu Kengai Shisetsu Monogatari* (Tokyo: Koudansha Gakujyutsu Bunko, 1989), 254.

Is there any other proof? Both Hayashi Tadasu, who negotiated the Anglo-Japanese alliance in London in 1902 and who became Japan's first Ambassador to Britain in 1905, and Tokutomi Soho, who is another major figure in Japanese historiography, suggested British involvement in the *Boshin war*. Hayashi recalled in his memoir what he had found while he was in London. He claimed to have found a significant document in a British blue book. This was Harry Parkes's report to Her Majesty's Government where he wrote that Britain should support the Japanese to found their new regime in order to create a legacy of British involvement. Hayashi concluded that, considering the fact that the French supported the Tycoon's Government, Parkes's suggestion should be accepted as true.⁵⁵² Although his analysis of British involvement was pretty vague, albeit different from the previous two historians, Hayashi apparently concluded that the Tycoon's Government had been supported by the French. Since he was a samurai of the Government and a prominent diplomat, his statement was considered definitive and as a result, relying on his opinion, subsequent historians could justify similar points of view.

However, a counter-argument against Hayashi is easily constructed. In terms of French involvement, Tokugawa Yoshinobu also testified in a 1911 interview that, after he had returned to Edo, the French Minister, Leon Roches, persistently recommended that he counter-attack the Imperial Court.⁵⁵³ Even if true, that would not be proof of French involvement because Roches simply offered his opinion. Shibusawa Eiichi later wrote

⁵⁵² Hayashi, 25.

⁵⁵³ Shibusawa (ed.), *Sekimukaihikki*, 276.

about Roches. According to him, Roches assured Yoshinobu that if he decided to counter-attack, the French would willingly produce battleships, weapons and other necessary materials.⁵⁵⁴ Perhaps, only this aspect was focused upon by later generations and, as a result, it was assumed that the Government had been supported by the French. Shibusawa concluded this episode with a statement by Frederick Dickins, who had written a life of Parkes, whereby Roches had tried to cajole the Tycoon for the purpose of transforming the Government into a French protectorate.⁵⁵⁵ It is uncertain whether Roches really had that intention, but since both British and Japanese eye-witnesses testified similarly regarding Roches's action, it appeared logical for Yoshinobu to regard French diplomacy in much the same way.

However, Shibusawa also clearly indicated that Yoshinobu rejected Roches's suggestion.⁵⁵⁶ Shibusawa was a major figure in the Tycoon's Government and accompanied Yoshinobu's younger brother, Akitake, when visiting Europe. As a leading official samurai, his statement was trustworthy. Because Yoshinobu rejected completely Roche's suggestion it must be accepted that the Government officially turned down any offer of French support. As Tycoon, Yoshinobu possessed a well developed political sense. As Fukuchi and Osatake insisted, if the foreigners became involved in Japanese domestic affairs then the Japanese would cease to be independent. Yoshinobu would certainly have recognized this.

⁵⁵⁴ Eiichi Shibusawa, *Tokugawa Yoshinobukou Den*, Vol. IV (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1968), 227.

⁵⁵⁵ Shibusawa, *Tokugawa Yoshinobukou Den*, Vol. III, 306.

⁵⁵⁶ Shibusawa, *Tokugawa Yoshinobukou Den*, Vol. IV, 228.

In fact, when Roches met with Yoshinobu, the latter had already been defined as an enemy of the state and might still have been tempted by Roches's suggestion for the purpose of recovering his political status and dignity, or at least continuing to resist in Edo. However, he did not. Furthermore, he rejected everything which could be interpreted as French involvement in any aspect of Japan's future. Perhaps, therefore, he should be regarded more highly in Japanese history.

Hayashi served the Meiji regime in Britain between 1900 and 1906 before returning home to become Japanese Foreign Minister. From being a samurai of the Tycoon's Government, his situation had now changed, which might well explain his eagerness to point out earlier failings of the Tycoon's Government above all else. Considering that, should Hayashi's material be judged worthless? Perhaps not, because indirectly he acknowledged British support for the Imperial Court and was not simply criticising the Tycoon's Government for the purpose of honouring his new masters. Nevertheless, he produced no evidence to show that either side in the civil war had been supported by the British or French.

How did Tokutomi Soho analyse these same historical events? As discussed in Chapter III, Tokutomi was a historian who had suggested the secret relationship between Ernest Satow and Saigo Takamori, and, based on that assumption, he had concluded that the British were involved in Japanese domestic affairs and insisted that they interfered in the civil war. He argued that from this private relationship between Satow and Saigo, it

could easily be understood how Satow might have encouraged Saigo to support the anti-Government movement, and that this was not just his personal attitude but that he represented the British Legation.⁵⁵⁷

There could be another possibility: by picking up on Satow's simple statement, nineteenth-century Japanese and modern Japanese historiography have both come to see him as if he were on the side of Satsuma. One example of this is Saigo's letter to Komatsu Tatewaki, a retainer of Satsuma, on 9 December 1866. The main content of this letter was the conversation with Satow wherein Satow was said to have expressed his honest feeling to Saigo: "Three years will be too long to wait" and in conclusion, Satow said, "Satsuma would have to be the leading figure".⁵⁵⁸ Saigo sent a letter to Katsura Hisatake, also a Satsuma samurai, on 4 August 1867, in which he wrote that it was a great shame for him to consult about the future political regime of Japan with a foreigner.⁵⁵⁹ Judging only from Saigo's letters, it could be concluded that Satow expected Satsuma to replace the Tycoon's Government and also that he expected to endorse the Meiji Restoration as soon as possible. That is why Satow's statement, "Three years will be too long to wait", became evidence that he had involved himself in Japanese domestic affairs.

It was the case that Satow also wrote about the conversation with Saigo in his diary on 12 January 1867, but the content there was different from

⁵⁵⁷ Soho Tokutomi, *Meiji Ishin to Edo Bakufu, Vol. III* (Tokyo: Kodansha Gakujyutsu Bunko, 1979) 36.

⁵⁵⁸ The Committee of edition of Saigo Takamori Zenshu (ed.), *Saigo Takamori Zenshu, Vol II* (Tokyo: Yamato Shobo, 1977), 181.

⁵⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 245.

Saigo's letters. When Satow met Saigo, he asked Saigo about the general Japanese evaluation of the 15th Shogun, Tokugawa Yoshinobu. Saigo answered that within three years, Yoshinobu's abilities would be exposed, only after which Satow said, "Three years will be too long to wait".⁵⁶⁰ Satow was likely trying to assess the political ability of the new Tycoon, Tokugawa Yoshinobu, which was why he told Saigo that he could not wait for three years. However, the Japanese focused attention not on the whole conversation but only on Satow's statement for the purpose of showing evidence of British involvement, and, as a result, for the Japanese, not only Satow but also the British more widely were judged to be involved in the Meiji Restoration. Satow's words might be strong evidence for orthodox Japanese historiography, but this was its only evidence for Satow's involvement. Thus, by selective quotation and by enforced speculation, Japanese historiography tried to justify its standing position.

Yet as for British involvement in the civil war, Tokutomi did not show any evidence for his opinions. In fact, although Tokutomi is regarded as a contemporary of the Meiji Restoration, he was not an adult at that time and was not a reliable eye-witness. That is one major point of counter-argument against him. Despite that, his material has always been treated as valuable for discussion of the Restoration. Perhaps that was because it was linked with the achievements of Tokutomi. His historical works, *Kindai Kokuminshi* (*The History of Modern Japanese Citizens*), in 100 volumes, was

⁵⁶⁰ PRO 30/33/15/2, Satow Diary, 12 January 1867.

started in 1918 and only completed in 1952.⁵⁶¹ Why such an effort? It was because he wished to remain the biographical authority for Japanese citizens in the future.⁵⁶² And above all his efforts to establish the significance of the Meiji Restoration led later Japanese historians to trust his books unconditionally.

Why then did the Japanese continue to insist on foreign involvement? Shibusawa noted one event which might provide a clue: Parkes's visit to Kagoshima in July 1866. As an historical event it did not look important, but for the eye-witnesses it raised serious questions because Parkes was British Minister and thus represented British policy in Japan. Kagoshima was not within the direct governance region of the Tycoon's Government. The feudal lord of Satsuma represented only that region and not Japan, but the British Minister nonetheless visited officially. As a result, Shibusawa claimed that after Parkes's visit the Satsuma samurais in Edo started to develop an individual relationship with the British at variance with the samurais of the Government.⁵⁶³ The Japanese, naturally, regarded the Government as representing their national sovereignty, whereby all the foreigners should maintain diplomatic relations only with the Tycoon. Parkes's official visit to Kagoshima was thus unacceptable and, naturally, the samurais of the Government suspected British interference in Satsuma. Furthermore, Parkes's action could be interpreted as insulting the Government's dignity, since it suggested to the Japanese that the British were trying to establish a

⁵⁶¹ Yonehara, 201.

⁵⁶² Ibid., 202.

⁵⁶³ Shibusawa, *Tokugawa Yoshinobukou Den*, Vol. III, 253.

close relationship with Satsuma, rather than with the Tycoon. Whether Parkes really considered his actions carefully or was just thoughtless, the fact remains that by his visit to Kagoshima a Japanese historiography evolved whereby the British had promised assistance for Satsuma to promote the Restoration.⁵⁶⁴

Mitford's following statement might also be considered as evidence that the British had supported Satsuma:

We have the most lovely weather. Yedo with all its flowering shrubs and fruit trees is a sight to see. Unfortunately, we poor prisoners can only be tantalized by it, and long to escape from spies and rush into the first wood with a book and a cigar to enjoy ourselves by ourselves without those infernal yakunins running after us. We are like caged larks looking out upon sunshine.⁵⁶⁵

Judging from just this passage, it can be guessed that the officials of the Tycoon's Government were worried about British diplomacy. For officials of the Tycoon's Government, spying on diplomats might be a routine job, but it can equally be assumed that because the Tycoon's Government thought that the British were on the side of Satsuma, they were particularly sensitive to the movement of British diplomats.

In the meantime, although it is only a secondary source, one work which traced the achievements of the French Minister, Leon Roches, during the Restoration era agreed with Shibusawa's analysis. Its author, Jean-Pierre Lehmann, wrote that Roches was said to have criticised Parkes

⁵⁶⁴ Ishii, *Meiji Ishin to Gaiatsu*, 106.

⁵⁶⁵ Mitford to his father, 17 March 1867, Mitford papers.

severely because the latter acted outside the norms of diplomacy.⁵⁶⁶ Not only from a Japanese point of view but also from an international perspective, Parkes's behaviour thus lacked fairness and neutrality. That might be why, when Roches suspected British support for the Imperial Court, the samurais of the Government did not disagree with him and, in fact, the cabinet of the Government showed its appreciation for Roches.⁵⁶⁷ As for Satsuma samurais, for the purpose of raising their political profile, they might have spread the rumour of a British connection, while Roches's criticism made the Government samurais suspicious. Together, these factors might well have established the notion that Satsuma had been supported by the British and, once established, evidence would be unnecessary because the propaganda of Satsuma and the conviction of the Government would henceforth lead all Japanese to believe that it was true.

However, analysing events from Parkes's point of view, things appear different. In August 1867 he visited Awa, and in the next month he visited Tosa. In fact, judging from Satow's memoir, Parkes visited various places in Japan, which means he did not focus only on Satsuma. Parkes, indeed, appeared to gather information by visiting various places. He had already verified some information via the Government, but for him, that was probably not enough, and to gain a deeper understanding of Japanese domestic affairs he likely felt that he would have to act independently. His years in the country were when the Japanese started to move towards the

⁵⁶⁶ Jean-Pierre Lehmann, 'Leon Roches—Diplomat Extraordinary in the Bakumatsu Era: An Assessment of His Personality and Policy', *Modern Asian Studies*, (1980), 295.

⁵⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 297.

Restoration, and Parkes, though officially neutral, was inevitably sensitive to these changes. He therefore could not rely upon information only from the Government, even if, from his attitude and actions, the Japanese drew conclusions to justify their own points of view.

The main idea contained in *Eikoku Sakuron* was also used to justify Japanese opinion. Osatake mentioned this in his speech on 3 December 1928. He cited Satow as the British official who had insisted in *Eikoku Sakuron* that the Tycoon simply represented the Confederate Daimyos and was not Japan's national sovereign.⁵⁶⁸ Osatake did not actually state that the British had supported Satsuma and the Imperial Court, but his whole speech left the audience with that impression. Osatake's analysis was thus that, through *Eikoku Sakuron*, Satow too had interfered in Japanese domestic affairs. Few Japanese in 1928 would have understood much about Satow and *Eikoku Sakuron*, and hence would have taken Osatake's assertion of British involvement as a fact. *Eikoku Sakuron* was, of course, only an essay which tried to define the relative constitutional positions of the Mikado and the Tycoon, and was not about British involvement. However, the fact that a British diplomat wrote that essay made an impact on the Japanese. They could not understand Satow's reason for writing other than British involvement.

When the Japanese discussed British interference in Japanese domestic affairs, one symbolic event is always used as an example: the plan to attack Edo castle in March 1868. The Japanese interpret it like this:

⁵⁶⁸ Osatake, 248.

Satsuma and Choshu had persisted in their attack on the castle, but suddenly gave up. The reason was that Saigo sent a messenger to the British Legation to explain the necessity of attacking the castle. Parkes strongly opposed this, and as a result, Saigo abandoned the original plan because he was afraid that Satsuma would lose British support. That was why he agreed to negotiations with the ex-Government for a peaceful settlement. This version is widely accepted by modern Japanese, the key incident being Parkes's objection. Japanese historiography has thereby stressed a strong relationship between the British and Satsuma.

However, according to this account, one question needs answering: why did Saigo send a messenger to Parkes? Japanese historiography says it was because Satsuma was being supported by the British. Around this time, it can be said that Parkes might have been involved in the civil war because, before the Imperial army attacked Edo castle, Parkes sent Satow to Katsu Kaishu, who was the representative of the ex-Tycoon's Government.⁵⁶⁹ More than that, Parkes expressed his honest feeling. In his report to Stanley on 9 April 1868, Parkes wrote that the conditions of surrender given to the ex-Tycoon by the Imperial Court were too severe, and that it would be a great sadness if he was given the maximum penalty.⁵⁷⁰ Judging from these statements, it may therefore be a little difficult to conclude that Parkes had never involved himself in Japanese domestic affairs. However, it cannot be taken as evidence that he was on the side of Satsuma. By what evidence can the Japanese prove this relationship? It is certainly hard to prove it using

⁵⁶⁹ FO46/92, Parkes to Stanley, 14 April 1868.

⁵⁷⁰ FO46/92, Parkes to Stanley, 9 April 1868.

Japanese materials. In fact, one Japanese scholar has challenged this traditional interpretation. According to Takashi Ishii in 1975, Saigo simply misunderstood the diplomatic policy of the British Legation.⁵⁷¹ This idea is significant because nobody had previously advanced that point of view. It is also valid because the Japanese had hitherto been discussing British involvement by analysing only Japanese materials and assumptions. Ishii proposed that *Eikoku Sakuron* represented the attitude of Alcock towards the Japanese, not that of Parkes, and that the samurais of Satsuma misunderstood this and mistook it for official British diplomacy.⁵⁷² That was why Saigo sent a messenger to the British Legation before a full attack on Edo castle. By this logic, Japanese in the nineteenth century were just confused about British diplomacy and Ishii explains Saigo's action in this way rather than any dependence on Parkes's support.⁵⁷³ This might well be true; indeed Saigo would not have sent a messenger otherwise, since it can be established from British records that the British did not support Satsuma in the civil war. In addition, Ishii suggested another drastic idea in the context of Japanese historiography: that the British still recognised the ex-Government and not the Imperial Court, because it was the Tycoon's Government which had officially signed the treaty with the British. Hence, for the British, the ex-Government remained the national government.⁵⁷⁴

⁵⁷¹ Takashi Ishii, *Meiji Ishin no Butaiura*, 2nd Edition (Tokyo: Iwanami Shinsho, 1975), 197-198.

⁵⁷² Ibid., 208-209.

⁵⁷³ Ibid., 197-198.

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid., 207.

Ishii's position is a minority opinion in Japanese historiography, yet at least it shows that there are some who do not accept the academic orthodoxy.

An analysis from the British point of view is now needed. After Tokugawa Yoshinobu surrendered his political power and authority, Parkes reported to Her Majesty's Government: '*I expressed great satisfaction on receiving this announcement.*'⁵⁷⁵ Relying only on this statement, which is what Japanese historiography expected to hear, the Japanese concluded that Parkes was pleased with Yoshinobu's decision. Indeed he was, but the reason was different from what the Japanese assumed. In another report, Parkes analysed Japanese domestic affairs thus:

The powers of the Tycoon were insufficient for the establishment of an efficient Government, and his position in relation to the Mikado was anomalous.⁵⁷⁶

Then he concluded:

The Tycoon had carefully weighed this plan, and, believed it to be the best for the country, had determined that his personal interests should not stand in the way of its adoption, and he had accordingly taken the first steps towards carrying it into execution by resigning the direction of affairs and subordinating all his acts to the authority of the Mikado. ⁵⁷⁷

⁵⁷⁵ FO410/12, Parkes to Stanley, 14 November 1867.

⁵⁷⁶ FO410/12, Parkes to Stanley, 15 December 1867.

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid.

Parkes was satisfied with Yoshinobu's decision because he had taken it for the future benefit of Japan and because it avoided further conspiracy.

In that report, Parkes also considered the reason for the current instability in Japanese domestic affairs, claiming that it was all because of the dual governance system caused by having two power sources.⁵⁷⁸ He had long recognized that, but, not being Japanese, he could not resolve the problem, hoping instead that the Japanese themselves could reform their political structure. In fact, when Parkes sent the report to Hammond on 28 November 1867, he expressed his frank opinion in respect of the restoration of Imperial rule. In it, he stated that the political struggle would now be solved because the Tycoon had bowed to the Mikado, and, as a result, civil war could be avoided.⁵⁷⁹ Parkes had never really expected this crisis to cause a civil war. In his report to Hammond on 31 October 1866 he wrote that if the Mikado, the Tycoon and the feudal lords could make an agreement without conflict, then there would be great cause to honour the common sense and moderation of all concerned.⁵⁸⁰ That was why Parkes expressed '*satisfaction*' when he heard the news. Parkes had no ill-feeling towards Yoshinobu. In fact, he appeared to evaluate him highly when he wrote:

The reputation he had thus gained would be greatly enhanced by the adoption of such a liberal and enlightened policy on home affairs.⁵⁸¹

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁹ FO391/14, Parkes to Hammond, 28 November 1867.

⁵⁸⁰ FO391/14, Parkes to Hammond, 31 October 1866.

⁵⁸¹ FO410/12, Parkes to Stanley, 14 November 1867.

Parkes came to be defined as anti-Government by the Japanese simply because he had addressed Yoshinobu as *Highness* rather than *Majesty* at Osaka castle on 29 April 1867. Also, stemming from this single historical fact, the Japanese came to define Yoshinobu as anti-British.

However, that view was created only by following a selective pattern of events. In fact, as Shibusawa recorded, Yoshinobu had invited Parkes to Osaka in April 1867, at which point Parkes told Yoshinobu that he had never been welcomed so warmly since arriving in Japan. This, arguably, was the beginning of a satisfactory diplomatic relationship between the British and Japanese.⁵⁸² From Shibusawa's account, it could be said that the relationship between Parkes and Yoshinobu was quite good and that there was no element of antagonism. In fact, what Parkes had told Yoshinobu was not merely superficial pleasantries, as from a British diplomat. Parkes wrote to Hammond on 6 May 1867 expressing his personal feeling that whatever Yoshinobu's social status would be, he would like to support Yoshinobu as much as possible because Yoshinobu was the most intelligent person whom he had ever met in Japan, and also because Yoshinobu would be a person to leave his name in history.⁵⁸³ Parkes's evaluation of Yoshinobu was thus excellent; Parkes never offered such a high evaluation for any other Japanese. Parkes and Yoshinobu seemed to share both traits of personality and a comparable political ability.

Of course, Parkes had already recognised that the Tycoon could not be the national sovereign of Japan, and had indeed so informed Hammond. He

⁵⁸² Shibusawa, *Tokugawa Yoshinobukou Den*, Vol. IV, 309.

⁵⁸³ FO391/14, Parkes to Hammond, 6 May 1867.

wrote that although the Tycoon expected to be recognised at the top of the national political hierarchy in Japan, the Mikado's status should always be higher.⁵⁸⁴ Thus, although Parkes rated Yoshinobu highly, it did not mean he expected Yoshinobu to be the sovereign. He simply esteemed Yoshinobu personally, and this is the point where Parkes's diplomacy must be considered to be different from that of Roches. Roches did involve himself in domestic affairs at the time of the civil war. Parkes never mixed official business with personal affairs. Parkes later met with Yoshinobu on 8 January 1868 when it was explained to him why Yoshinobu had returned his political authority. And when they talked about who was the national sovereign of Japan, Yoshinobu said that it was the Mikado and that nobody would disagree.⁵⁸⁵ He also told Parkes that he had made his decision for the future good of Japan.⁵⁸⁶

Considering the above, Parkes did not judge Yoshinobu's action as unwilling, and Yoshinobu appeared to convey his feelings because he recognized that Parkes understood him perfectly. They even seemed to have the same vision for Japan's future, which was why, when the Battle of Toba-Fushimi had begun, Parkes had sent a report to London expressing his *Regret*.⁵⁸⁷ Parkes had been anticipating the founding of a new regime without any conflict, and feared that civil war would cause nothing but confusion and disorder-an attitude indicating that Parkes had no intention of

⁵⁸⁴ FO391/14, Parkes to Hammond, 22 July 1867.

⁵⁸⁵ FO410/12, Parkes to Stanley, 10 January 1868, inclosure, Memorandum of Interview with the Tycoon, 8 January 1868.

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁷ FO410/12, Parkes to Stanley, 29 January 1868.

interfering in Japanese domestic affairs or taking advantage of any civil war. The Foreign Secretary, Stanley, replied that Parkes's analysis was entirely appropriate and that all members of the British Government agreed.⁵⁸⁸ Another reason why Stanley trusted Parkes's decision might be related to the statement which Parkes had sent to Stanley on 15 February 1868. Parkes wrote that in terms of the relationship between the Mikado and the Tycoon, and also in terms of how their respective status should be defined, no foreigners should be involved. The Japanese themselves should make the decision.⁵⁸⁹ From this statement, Parkes's determination to maintain neutrality was apparent and, as a result, not only Stanley but also the British Government could trust his political judgement. Had Parkes acted from an arbitrary decision or made a misjudgement, Stanley would not have written that. In 1864, in contrast, when Alcock had advocated the bombardment of Shimonoseki before receiving any orders from Her Majesty's Government, he had been recalled. Stanley clearly trusted Parkes's conduct, and reminded him:

Her Majesty's Government have only one object in Japan, the maintenance of friendly intercourse and trade with the ruling Powers and the people of the country. They have no intention of indentifying themselves with any party that may spring up, or of aiming at any influence beyond what is required for upholding their Treaty right.⁵⁹⁰

⁵⁸⁸ FO410/12, Stanley to Parkes, 26 March 1868.

⁵⁸⁹ FO46/91, Parkes to Stanley, 15 February 1868.

⁵⁹⁰ FO410/12, Stanley to Parkes, 10 March 1868.

The British thereby showed their diplomatic approach. They wanted only commercial activities, and Stanley wrote nothing about colonisation. Admittedly, he wrote '*the ruling Powers*' and did not stipulate the Tycoon's Government. The hypothesis whereby the British indirectly approved of the Imperial Court could be explained by that, although only by interpreting the words used in a particular way. The Japanese historical point of view notwithstanding, there appears to be no indication that the British favoured the Imperial Court.

Although Stanley focused only on commercial activities, he did allow Parkes to use naval power for the purpose of protecting British subjects and property during the civil war.⁵⁹¹ Apart from that, though, the British Government officially prohibited the use of any military force. In fact, Austen H. Layard, an under-secretary at the Foreign Office between 1861 and 1866, questioned the bombardment of Shimonoseki, as directed by Alcock in 1864.⁵⁹² Layard worried that the following situation might follow from Alcock's diplomacy:

If the intended attack upon Prince Choshu shall have taken place and shall have led to hostilities in the neighbourhood of Yokohama, or should an attack have been made in Yokohama for any other cause or any other pretext, it may be necessary to occupy temporarily the heights surrounding that place, in order to prevent the Japanese from success in such hostilities. ⁵⁹³

⁵⁹¹ Ibid.

⁵⁹² FO410/8, Layard to Lugard, 25 October 1864.

⁵⁹³ Ibid.

His statement suggests that once the British interfered in Japanese internal affairs with military force, there would arise another situation in which the British would have to use further military force to maintain their foothold in Japan. If so, how could British merchants promote their commercial activities? Therefore, unless British subjects and their properties were threatened, the British Government would not give permission to use any military force, and had no intention to intervene in Japanese domestic affairs.

And, unlike Alcock, Parkes followed this order; after the civil war he was still Minister in Japan. Had he acted as most Japanese historians have claimed, he would not have remained in Japan. The British, it transpired, never interfered in Japan's domestic affairs. The episode whereby Satow was said to suggest to Saigo that the British Legation could send troops to help the Imperial Court emerged only later for internal Japanese justification purposes. And, before the attack on Edo castle, when Satow met Katsu Kaishu from the ex-Tycoon's Government, Satow never told Katsu that the British had any specific interest in the outcome of the civil war nor hinted that they might side with the ex-Tycoon's Government. He merely wished to confirm Katsu's political plan for the next step.⁵⁹⁴ Had Satow been regarded as a British spy, Katsu would probably not have surrendered Edo castle so soon, hoping instead for British military help.

There is one further traditional Japanese historical belief. It is that because the British supported the Imperial Court they were able to establish

⁵⁹⁴ FO49/92, Parkes to Stanley, 14 April 1868, inclosure, Satow's memorandum, 14 April 1868.

a strong diplomatic relationship with the new Meiji Government, while, because the French had supported the Tycoon's Government, they lost all credibility in Japan. How should this idea be treated? According to Lehmann, Roches did not deserve to be the Imperial agent of Napoleon III⁵⁹⁵ because of his catastrophic and one-sided diplomacy, hence his successor, Max Outrey, had no influence in Japan.⁵⁹⁶ This suggests that it was not just by virtue of the victory of the Imperial Court but also due to Roches's diplomatic failures that the British established their close relationship with the Meiji Government. It was a case of French self-destruction, but, because the Japanese have not focused on the French, this aspect was forgotten. Lehmann clearly criticises Roches as an incompetent adventurer.⁵⁹⁷ Furthermore, although it was not directly expressed, Parkes described the diplomatic attitude of Roches in his report to Hammond on 22 July 1867. It was that Roches supported the rootless idea that the Tycoon was Japan's national sovereign and also its supreme being.⁵⁹⁸

As both Tokugawa Yoshinobu and Shibusawa Eiichi testified, Roches had been urging Yoshinobu to counter-attack the Imperial Court. In so doing, however, he did not represent the French Government. It was his own idea, but because of it the Japanese naturally assumed that the French were trying to involve themselves in Japanese domestic affairs via support for the Tycoon's Government. The main concern for French diplomacy was in reality

⁵⁹⁵ Lehmann, 304.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid., 305.

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid., 306.

⁵⁹⁸ FO391/14, Parkes to Hammond, 22 July 1867.

to promote an active silk trade.⁵⁹⁹ Like the British, therefore, the French Government did not expect its envoy to involve France in Japanese matters. However, at the time of civil war Roches suddenly began to support the Tycoon's Government. Lehmann defined the guidelines for French diplomacy:

France harboured no colonial aims in Japan and Roches was not an imperialist agent of Napoleon III in the Far East.⁶⁰⁰

Like the British, the French tried to focus only on commercial activities. Roches had to be recalled because he violated official French guidelines and was subsequently discredited as not being a well trained diplomat. This alone would explain the collapse of French diplomatic influence in Japan. There is no need for the idea that Britain's superior diplomatic standing was because they had supported the Imperial Court.

Strangely enough, considering the behaviour of these diplomats during the civil war, Parkes was criticised more than Roches because many journalists considered that it was Parkes who had been supporting the Tycoon unnecessarily. *The North China Herald* of 31 January 1868 cited an article from *The Japan Times* which condemned Parkes for focusing on relations only with the Tycoon, and not making enough effort to establish a relationship with the other side.⁶⁰¹ *The North China Herald* even concluded

⁵⁹⁹ Lehmann, 274.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid., 284.

⁶⁰¹ Committee of International News Publication and Mainichi Communications (ed.), *Gaikoku Shinbun ni Miru Nihon*, 422.

that as a personal favour to Hitotsubashi (Yoshinobu. Before he became Tycoon that was his family name), Parkes chose to take the losing side, rather than the winning side.⁶⁰² Analysis of this article is bound to arouse controversy within some Japanese academic circles, because, from this third viewpoint, Parkes was clearly identified as a man on the side of the Tycoon's Government. Yet because Parkes was not involved in Japanese affairs at all, this journalistic criticism was misplaced. However, it showed one thing: that the orthodox Japanese historical perspective does not reflect any obvious truth.

In May 1868 Parkes handed his credentials to the Mikado; his action was sooner than that of other diplomats. The civil war still raged, which was why this action by Parkes has also been cited by Japanese to justify the idea of British support for the Imperial Court. In his report to Hammond on 9 April 1868 Parkes acknowledged this swift action by the British Government. He wrote that he truly appreciated receiving new credentials to the Mikado in such a short period, because in the current situation this would confer great advantages.⁶⁰³ Looking at this statement on its own, it could be interpreted as Parkes welcoming the defeat of the Tycoon's Government. By that logic, it could be concluded that the British were on the side of the Imperial Court. However, according to the official document, Stanley sent the credentials to Parkes on 18 February 1868.⁶⁰⁴ Considering that it took three months to communicate between Britain and Japan,

⁶⁰² Ibid., 122.

⁶⁰³ FO391/14, Parkes to Hammond, 9 April 1867.

⁶⁰⁴ FO410/12, Stanley to Parkes, 18 February 1868.

presumably Parkes requested these new credentials from Her Majesty's Government at the time when Tokugawa Yoshinobu first returned his political authority to the Mikado in November 1867. This means that for him, it did not seem to matter which side prevailed because, whether the ex-Tycoon or Satsuma, they would equally establish a regime under the Mikado, and there would no longer be the dual authority as under the Tokugawa Shogunate. Indeed, Tokugawa Yoshinobu seems already to have told Parkes that the Mikado was the national sovereign. Since that was certain, Parkes did not hesitate to request new credentials. A regime under the Mikado was what he expected. Thus, this decision was not because he had any secret agreement with Satsuma but precisely because he was not involved in domestic affairs. To have followed Roches's example would have risked a significant diplomatic failure in which case he could never have presented his credentials. From this aspect too, the Japanese orthodox analysis can be refuted.

What, then, of the relationship between Satow and Saigo mentioned in earlier chapters? Eye-witness and modern Japanese accounts both point to their special relationship, and, as a result, Satow is deemed to have meddled in the civil war. In Satow's memoir Saigo's name appears, so certainly there was a relationship between them. However, as stated previously, other Japanese names are in there too. In addition to that, in terms of political debate and the challenge to construct a modern state, one Japanese was mentioned by both Satow and Mitford in their memoirs. This was the Tosa samurai, Goto Shojiro. They advised him about the British political structure

and its Parliamentary system and discussed the essentials of a modern state.⁶⁰⁵ By contrast, there is no record of any similar discussion with Saigo. Furthermore, when Mitford compared Goto with Saigo, he evaluated Goto more highly by using the word '*Conspicuous*'.⁶⁰⁶

For Japanese, Saigo has always been defined as one of the three heroes of the Meiji Restoration and hence they consider him the more able. Their evaluation, however, rests largely on the testimony of Tokugawa Yoshinobu in an interview in 1907 when the ex-Shogun expressed the view that no samurai in his government matched Saigo's political qualities.⁶⁰⁷ The British, though, did not appear to evaluate Saigo in quite the same way. Admittedly, Satow's memoir rated Saigo above Goto in terms of intellectual calibre⁶⁰⁸ although in his diary on 4 September 1867 Satow certainly judged Goto to be clever and noted that the two men promised unchangeable friendship.⁶⁰⁹ Interestingly, in the same diary entry, although he rated Saigo higher than Goto,⁶¹⁰ Satow did not record any promise of unchangeable friendship with Saigo. Thus, in terms of political ability, Satow thought highly of Saigo but, in terms of personality, Satow preferred Goto. Even so, in September 1867 when Parkes met the ex-feudal lord, Yamauchi Youdo, the British praised Goto's ideas, and it was Goto's vision

⁶⁰⁵ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 267 and Redesdale, *Memories*, Vol. II, 416-417.

⁶⁰⁶ Redesdale, *Memories*, Vol. II, 415.

⁶⁰⁷ Shibusawa (ed.), *Sekimukaihikki*, 20.

⁶⁰⁸ Satow, *A Diplomat in Japan*, 267.

⁶⁰⁹ PRO 30/33/15/2, Satow Diary, 4 September 1867.

⁶¹⁰ Ibid.

for the future of Japan which was said to have been supported by the British.⁶¹¹

As a practical politician to construct a modern state, however, Satow did not value Goto. In fact, when it came to implementing political change, Satow appeared not to have a high opinion of Saigo either. For example, after Saigo proposed constructing a parliament of the whole nation to replace the Tycoon's Government, Satow, when he heard about it, concluded that Saigo's idea sounded ridiculous.⁶¹² As for Goto's plan, which was almost the same, Mitford considered that it was too hasty because the Japanese were not sufficiently matured, politically, to handle rapid change.⁶¹³ Like Satow, Mitford had respect for Goto but neither diplomat could agree with Goto either.

Furthermore, there is a reference which may prove that Parkes too did not think so well of Saigo. It was in a report which Parkes sent to Stanley on 22 December 1867. In it, Parkes described his nervous feeling that the foreigners were not protected effectively, and then wrote that Saigo did not seem to take this matter so seriously.⁶¹⁴ Parkes said no more, but from this statement it can be guessed that he had reservations about Saigo's political reliability.

⁶¹¹ Katsuo Inoue, *Bakumatsu Ishin Seijishi no Kenkyu* (Tokyo: Haniwa Shobo, 1994), 344.

⁶¹² Takashi Ishii, *Meiji Ishin no Kokusaiteki Kankyo, Vol. III* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Koubunkan, 1973), 723.

⁶¹³ Redesdale, *Memories, Vol. II*, 417.

⁶¹⁴ FO46/83, Parkes to Stanley, 22 December 1867, inclosure, Parkes to Stanley, 29 December 1867.

Comparing these responses, Satow was perhaps too severe on Saigo's plan. Satow did not explain why, but in all likelihood it was because Satow simply did not esteem Saigo above Goto. Unlike Goto, Saigo did not have any well matured political knowledge and could not explain effectively his views about a modern Japanese state. Saigo's plan lacked an informed political background and much by way of future vision, and, as a result, Satow dismissed it as '*insane*'.⁶¹⁵ Regarding Saigo's political views, Mounsey stated that he did not wish to retain the feudal system in its entirety, but, whilst Satsuma governed Japan, Saigo championed Satsuma.⁶¹⁶ Writing in 1879, Mounsey thought that Saigo's attitude was one of the factors in causing the rebellion and civil war in 1877, so it is possible that at the time of the Meiji Restoration Satow might have had such an idea in his mind. That too could be why Satow did not evaluate Sago so highly in terms of political ability. Thus, although Saigo had a relationship with Satow, Satow did not trust his political judgment. As for the episode when Satow reportedly suggested to Saigo sending British troops, that was either created by Japanese or a later

⁶¹⁵ In his diary on 26 August 1867 Satow wrote that he had met with Saigo and that they talked about the political figures of a future Japan. (PRO 30/33/15/2, Satow Diary, 26 August 1867). He did not write "insane" in his diary, so, it could be concluded that when Satow wrote that in his memoir, he was expressing his feeling many years later. However, the absence of such frank expression in his diary does not necessarily mean that Satow esteemed the political ideas of Saigo highly at the time of the Meiji Restoration.

⁶¹⁶ Mounsey, 101-102.

generation for the purpose of honouring Saigo, or invented by Saigo for the purpose of raising his own standing.⁶¹⁷

It can be shown that the British were never involved in Japanese politics. In addition, on 26 February 1867 Parkes wrote to Stanley that it was important that Mitford had received retainers from Aizu because it could thereby be shown that the British were neutral in the conflict and would welcome any Japanese.⁶¹⁸ Because Aizu was a fief which supported the Tycoon's Government and fought against Satsuma and Choshu, inviting the retainers of Aizu to a reception might have indicated that the British would be against Satsuma and Choshu. However, the invitation would on balance be advantageous for the British by demonstrating their neutrality. Not only Mitford but also Satow showed the same attitude towards the Japanese. According to his diary of 31 December 1866, Satow explained to the samurais of Uwajima that the British would never become involved in Japan's domestic affairs.⁶¹⁹

By these episodes, one thing was proved: all the members of the British Legation followed the official guideline of the British Government. More

⁶¹⁷ In fact, in his diary on 8 January 1867, Satow wrote about the conversation with Date Munenari. Date suggested to Satow that if civil war happened in Japan there would be difficulties for international trade, so, to avoid that situation, the British should support the Japanese. (PRO30/33/15/1, Satow Diary, 8 January 1867). However, Satow rejected his idea by claiming that if the British were involved in any civil war the situation would not be resolved so easily, and, as a result, international trade would be suspended completely. (PRO30/33/15/1, Satow Diary, 8 January 1867). From these statements, it can be concluded that Satow neither involved himself in Japan's domestic affairs nor contributed to any conspiracy.

⁶¹⁸ FO46/78, Parkes to Stanley, 26 February 1867.

⁶¹⁹ PRO30/33/15/1, Satow Diary, 31 December 1866.

than that, the British themselves tried to let the Japanese recognise their formal guideline, as the following statement of Mitford suggests:

England is the very good friend of Japan under whatsoever form of government.⁶²⁰

Admittedly it was a simple statement, but that simple statement summed up British diplomacy. The British did not really care about any future Japanese regime: they focused only on the future for international trade.

Yet even the historian, Takashi Ishii, who tried to revise Japanese historical orthodoxy and to suggest new perspectives, still insisted that there was British involvement in Japan's domestic affairs according to international law. According to official documents, on 20 February 1868 the representatives of Britain, France, the Netherlands, the United States, Italy and Prussia agreed to declare neutrality in the conflict between the Mikado and the ex-Tycoon.⁶²¹ By this declaration, they tried to assure the Japanese that they would not become involved and also appealed to them not to request any foreign support. From this declaration, their common position seems clear enough.

However, according to Ishii, this declaration contained an illegality because, as a result, both the regime of the Mikado and that of the ex-Tycoon

⁶²⁰ FO46/83, Parkes to Stanley, 29 December 1867, inclosure, Mitford's memorandum, 22 December 1867.

⁶²¹ FO410/12, Parkes to Stanley, 11 March 1868, inclosure, Memorandum of Foreign Representatives agreeing to observe Neutrality in the war between the Mikado and the Tycoon.

were defined as belligerents.⁶²² Not only, therefore, was the Mikado's regime acknowledged to have the same political status as that of the ex-Tycoon internationally but, by virtue of it, the ex-Tycoon's regime lost its political legitimacy and became defined as merely a belligerent, like the Mikado.⁶²³ Tokugawa Yoshinobu had, of course, already returned his political authority to the Mikado, following which the Imperial Court declared the establishment of the new regime on 8 January 1868. However, in February 1868 the Western states had not handed diplomatic credentials to the Mikado, so, under international law, neutrality by the Western states was illegal. The Mikado's regime was not internationally acknowledged, therefore the ex-Tycoon was still the representative of Japan with whom the foreign powers had signed their treaties and had a diplomatic relationship. Yet although the Mikado's regime was not officially recognised internationally, by that declaration the Imperial Court was indirectly approved. Parkes intended that the Westerners should not become involved in the civil war and he did not expect the Japanese to ask him for help. But to avoid those possibilities, he made that declaration and as a result the Mikado's regime was de facto approved by the Western nations. If Parkes really did not expect to be involved in domestic affairs, Ishii contends, then he should not have made that declaration.

As a result of this declaration and its implicit acknowledgement of the Mikado's regime the following happened:

⁶²² Takashi Ishii, *Ishin no Nairan*, (Tokyo: Shiseido Shobo, 1974), 53.

⁶²³ *Ibid.*, 53.

1. The action of the Mikado's regime to take over Osaka and Hyogo became justified. Those were cities directly governed by the ex-Tycoon, but their military occupation was now approved internationally.
2. The ex-Tycoon's Government had ordered a battleship from the US, but because of this foreign neutrality, could not now receive it from the Americans.⁶²⁴

Considering these historical facts, Ishii concluded that the declaration of neutrality caused nothing but disadvantage for the ex-Tycoon's Government.⁶²⁵ Perhaps understandably, many modern Japanese concluded that the British must have favoured the side of the Imperial Court.

Although it may not be strong evidence, there is one possible reason why Parkes had to declare neutrality as quickly as possible. It relates to the agreement of 22 July 1864. Before the bombardment of Shimonoseki, the Western representatives had agreed the following five points in Yokohama:

1. Neutrality of Japanese regions. This agreement would also be applied to the ports for international commerce.
2. Mutual understanding and combined actions for the purpose of protecting free trade.
3. Combined actions to protect foreigners' lives and properties.
4. In terms of the Japanese regions, nobody should request any special concession from the Japanese. Also, none should accept any Japanese

⁶²⁴ Ibid., 53-54.

⁶²⁵ Ibid., 53-54.

offer.

5. In terms of Japanese domestic conflict, nobody should interfere in Japanese jurisdiction.⁶²⁶

Since the bombardment of Shimonoseki the above five agreements appeared to have held among the Westerners. That was why when the civil war happened in 1868 Western representatives could agree on neutrality in such a short period. Thus, from the Western point of view, nothing had changed. But from the Japanese point of view it was not so simple because the Japanese political situation was very different from what it had been in 1864. In 1864 the Imperial Court did not sanction a civil war. That was why, in 1868, Western declarations of neutrality now offered an advantage to the Imperial Court. As a result, Japanese historiography has defined the British as being on the side of the Imperial Court.

Did Parkes consider all this before deciding about the declaration? In light of his instructions before the civil war, that Britain was concerned only with commercial activities and should never become involved in Japanese domestic affairs, he might have thought that for the purpose of maintaining British dignity he would avoid any situation whereby Britain could be accused of any such interference. That might have led him to declare neutrality as quickly as possible, otherwise it seemed apparent that both sides would try to draw the British into the civil war for the purpose of

⁶²⁶ Max von Brandt, Kiyoshi Hara and Atsushi Nagaoka (trans.), *Dreiunddreissig Jahre in Ost-Asien Erinnerungen eines deutschen Diplomaten* (Tokyo: Shinjinbutsu Ouraisha, 1987), 77.

justifying their own political position. The episode between Satow and Saigo might well have been an example of that. Perhaps, it was not Satow who offered but Saigo who requested British military help in the civil war. Parkes's quick action could thus be explained as a measure to forestall any conspiracy by the Japanese and to prevent the Japanese from taking any advantage of the foreigners. Ishii was correct about international law, but at the time of the civil war Parkes had to make a decision quickly to safeguard Britain's position in Japan.

Not only in 1868 but also among subsequent generations, to justify their beliefs and to produce advantageous conclusions, Japanese writers have analysed unfairly when emphasizing the British role in their history. Before any detailed analysis, such Japanese had already determined the outcome, and to reach it they did whatever was necessary. The idea that the British were associated with domestic Japanese matters emerged from that intellectual background. Yet by analysing events from the British and wider international standpoints their conclusion cannot be accepted as historically sound.

Both before and during the civil war, the British, as in past years, simply wanted effective administration, the maintenance of order, and the observation and profitable operation of commercial treaties in Japan; whoever or whatever political arrangements could provide those conditions would always likely gain their approval and support. There is some evidence, though, to show that the British might have distanced themselves from the Tycoon's Government. A guideline was sent from Russell to Parkes on 23

August 1865 in which Russell wrote that it was after the supposed subjection of Satsuma and Choshu that he began to doubt what the Tycoon's Government had been telling us.⁶²⁷ Judging from this, it can be surmised that the British no longer entirely trusted the Tycoon's Government, and this might be considered as the point, after 1864, when the British began to associate themselves more with Satsuma. This, anyway, is what Japanese historiography has long defined as orthodoxy. If this hypothesis were correct, then 1864 might be held up as the turning point for British diplomacy towards Japan.

However, in reality, the British never changed their attitude. They might well have doubted the reliability of the Tycoon's Government but they never questioned maintaining their diplomatic relations with the Tycoon. In the same official document, Russell wrote that the British Government would sincerely maintain the 1858 Treaty.⁶²⁸ This demonstrates that the British never changed their diplomacy and also that the Meiji Restoration was not caused by any British political influence. The Japanese fought each other in 1868-69 to determine, in effect, which elements from the old feudal structure would control the new system—a system born in November 1867 when the last Shogun was obliged to acknowledge that the Tokugawa clan, after more than 260 years, could no longer keep domestic order or regulate the nation's external affairs and hence returned the mandate to govern to the Mikado as Japan's spiritual authority. In fact, the British played little part in the Meiji Restoration and in the struggle for supremacy which

⁶²⁷ FO262/88, Russell to Parkes, 23 April 1865.

⁶²⁸ Ibid.

followed. For the participants in that struggle, however, their propaganda value was immense. In fact, Parkes had doubts about Satsuma's policy. In his report to Hammond on 16 January 1867, he wrote that perhaps Satsuma intended to establish an oligarchy but could not be confident whether the Japanese would benefit by such a regime.⁶²⁹ This statement proves that Parkes already suspected Satsuma's political ambitions before the civil war. That being so, would he have decided to support Satsuma by violating his official guidance? Furthermore, since many nineteenth-century Japanese might likewise have doubted Satsuma's policy, it suited the samurais of Satsuma to promote the propaganda line that the British were on their side by picking up on any small incident. For the samurais of Satsuma to claim that the British were on their side helped to justify the new Meiji Government, and, based on that, Japanese historiography has defined diplomatic relations at the time of the Meiji Restoration accordingly. Japanese historiography contributed the *raison d'être* for the Meiji government: it did not care much for evidence derived from historical facts. As will be further examined in the next chapter, it was the forces of Satsuma and Choshu which harnessed the cry of foreign menace most successfully to their cause.

⁶²⁹ FO391/14, Parkes to Hammond, 16 January 1867.

Chapter X: The Japanese background to the Meiji Restoration

In addition to the common Japanese assumption that in the civil war from 1867-69 the British supported Satsuma, Choshu and the Imperial Court, while the French supported the Tycoon's Government, as indicated earlier, it is commonly believed that Britain's hidden intention was colonisation through the new regime. Thus, to thwart that conspiracy, the

Japanese ended their civil war as quickly as possible, and as a result were able to establish the modern state and save the Japanese mainland from Western imperialism. If the Tycoon's Government had existed after 1868, or had the civil war continued, the Japanese would have been dominated by the Westerners. These notions are seldom doubted by modern Japanese. Historical analysis and discussion produce neither new ideas nor promote counter-arguments. Since the foundation of the Meiji Government this has been historical orthodoxy.

British historians have generally considered three reasons for the collapse of the Shogunate. First, that the Tycoon's Government allowed foreigners, who had always been regarded as 'Western barbarians', to construct their Legations in Edo. The second reason is that the government accepted low tariffs on foreign imports to the detriment of the domestic economy and the Japanese population. Finally, that the Shogunate was constantly blamed by Western powers for failing to maintain the international treaties.⁶³⁰ British historians have also defined the diplomatic attitude of the Western powers. Daniels observed in 1968 that 'Britain's prime objective in Japan was certainly to obtain an expanding trade and safe conditions for British merchants', although he recognised that Satow's attitude, and that of Mitford, were different.⁶³¹ British historians judge that although Alcock showed military power to the Shogunate for the purpose of

⁶³⁰ Stephen Large, 'Modern Japan's Troubled Pursuit of Wealth and Power', *The Historical Journal*, 40, 2 (1997), 538. An earlier study of British policy in this period is Daniels, 'The British Role in the Meiji Restoration'. See also James McMaster, *Sabotaging the Shogun: Western Diplomats Open Japan, 1859-69* (New York: Vantage Press, 1992).

⁶³¹ Daniels, 'The British Role in the Meiji Restoration', 292.

negotiation, he had never had any intention of using it because, if he used military force, the British would gain little advantage when compared with its great cost and the difficulties which would follow.⁶³² This assessment is important to show because it will be a necessary comparison with the analysis of the Meiji Restoration created in orthodox Japanese historiography.

Albeit still a minor movement, after the Second World War some historians emerged who questioned that orthodoxy. Their intention was to test whether there was really any possibility of Japan being colonised by the West during the Meiji Restoration. As indicated in chapter one, the historian Akira Tanaka has explained the historical process.

According to Akira Tanaka, the first questioning occurred in 1951 when the historian Shigeki Tohyama published a book suggesting that although the possibility of economic subordination to the West existed because of Japan's inferiority, politically there was no possibility of colonisation.⁶³³ Tohyama thereby denied one aspect of traditional Japanese thinking. 1951 was almost a century after the Meiji Restoration, and Tohyama felt the need to explain why it took so long to propose this new idea. According to him, before the Second World War nobody was allowed to undertake free research and analysis about either Emperors or the imperial system.⁶³⁴ Also, until the end of the war, historians could not access materials which related to

⁶³² Large, 'Modern Japan's Troubled Pursuit of Wealth and Power', 539.

⁶³³ Tanaka, *Bakumatsu Ishin-shi no Kenkyu*, 67-70.

⁶³⁴ Shigeki Tohyama, *Meiji Ishin to Tenno* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1991), 4.

Emperors and Court nobles.⁶³⁵ Hence until 1945 there was no scholarly analysis or discussion about the Meiji Restoration, which was why 1951 saw the first challenge to historical orthodoxy. A large counter-argument against Tohyama then started.

According to Tanaka, in the same year in which Tohyama published his work, the historian Kiyoshi Inoue did the same. Inoue's method was to review every historical incident in order to strengthen the traditional concept, and, by adopting that attitude, he refuted Tohyama's proposals.⁶³⁶ Thus Inoue tried to defend academically the old idea that the Japanese in the nineteenth century were in danger of being colonised. These two publications in 1951 marked the beginning of the debate about whether the Japanese faced colonisation or not. However, even though the new proposal from Tohyama had emerged, it did not split Japanese academic opinion into two or caused long-term discussion by leading to a review of historical material. In fact, most scholars maintained traditional ideas and refused to acknowledge any new interpretation. As a result, although a new historical movement was temporarily created, before it could receive public recognition, Tohyama's idea was strongly denied. In 1981 Takuji Shibahara published his book, which supported Inoue not only by criticising Tohyama's method of promoting argument and his conclusions, but also because it demonstrated a systematic academic discipline.⁶³⁷ In Shibahara's work, Japanese academic authorities found historical concepts which modern

⁶³⁵ Ibid., 5.

⁶³⁶ Tanaka, *Bakumatsu Ishin-shi no Kenkyu*, 67-70.

⁶³⁷ Ibid., 67-70.

Japanese could equally accept as commonplace. After this, Tohyama compromised.⁶³⁸ From the beginning, Tohyama was under a disadvantage because he was not only a minor scholar but also because nobody followed after him. But he was important because the Japanese academic field did change a little whereby some historians started to re-examine the traditional notion of the Meiji Restoration.

With the systematic work of Shibahara and the concessions made by Tohyama, the argument within Japanese scholarship appeared to have ended and the orthodoxy was reconfirmed whereby Japan in the nineteenth century was in danger of colonisation. However, that does not mean there has been no further opinion. In 1991 Takashi Ishii published another book in which he disputed Shibahara's conclusions. He did not deny all Shibahara's ideas, but he challenged academic authority by insisting that Shibahara's ideas would need to be re-examined.⁶³⁹ Ishii did not deny Western pressure on the Japanese, but he asserted that it was not for colonisation but for economic subordination and for the purpose of developing a new market for Western capitalism.⁶⁴⁰ Ishii's idea was not so sensational compared with those of Tohyama but many historians nevertheless argued against him. But Ishii never compromised his major concept and he remains a small though valuable contribution to Japanese scholarship.

What, then, was the real danger of colonisation by the West? The Japanese in the nineteenth century understandably were fearful after the

⁶³⁸ Ibid., 67-70.

⁶³⁹ Ibid., 67-70.

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid., 67-70.

arrival of foreigners. In fact, in 1853, when Perry first arrived in Uraga, the wife of the principal of the feudal school in Kii, Kawai Ume, wrote twice about Perry in her diary.⁶⁴¹ Even within Japan's strict social structure where ordinary citizens did not move around the country, this lady was already apprehensive about the arrival of Westerners. That was the psychological impact of Perry. After him, the British, French and Russians arrived, also with military forces. Although the Japanese had long maintained commercial relations with the Dutch, that had been under severe restrictions and the Dutch were never seen except at Nagasaki. Against that background, it was only natural that the Japanese had a fear of colonisation and the attitude of nineteenth-century Japanese need not be examined further. The point of contention is the attitude of modern Japanese, because they know of subsequent historical developments and, furthermore, can access primary materials and official documents. Modern Japanese have been able to construct argument using those materials, so, given that, scholars now have to examine how and why certain conclusions about Western diplomacy were reached at the time of the Meiji Restoration. The major purpose of this chapter is to analyse how modern Japanese came to comprehend the nineteenth-century domestic situation.

In modern Japan, when academics have attempted to analyse both the political and diplomatic situations at the time of the Meiji Restoration, they have always confronted the overriding concept, as already explained above.

⁶⁴¹ Ibid., 76.

The majority have conformed to it. Those are principally Inoue, Shibahara and Shiso Hattori. Together they are recognized as historical authorities regarding the Meiji Restoration, while after them came Yuzo Akiyama and Jiro Chaya with their analyses of nineteenth-century Japan. Tohyama and Ishii stand opposed to them. Tohyama and Ishii admitted the sense of danger, but they did not support the idea that Japan could become colonised like so much of Asia and Africa. Tanaka, who merely described the historical evolution of these arguments, remained neutral. So, what was the basis for their respective arguments?

Kiyoshi Inoue wrote in the first page in his book: Our ancestors were the only Asian race who could achieve independence from Western imperialism.⁶⁴² However, his sentence is problematic because Inoue wrote: *achieve independence*. But which state ever colonised Japan? Through Japanese history, the only time when the Japanese were governed by foreigners was between 1945 and 1951. Furthermore, that was not colonisation; American administration followed the Second World War and even promoted democracy. Had Inoue written, *maintain independence*, his point would be more easily understood; but he did not. Furthermore, he did not indicate which state had effectively colonised Japan at the time of the Meiji Restoration, thereby avoiding any need to discuss it in detail or to explain how the Japanese achieved independence. He did not indicate either which historical materials he had used or was referring to.

⁶⁴² Kiyoshi Inoue, 1.

To illustrate the crisis of colonisation, Inoue pointed to two historical incidents. The first relates to the foreign settlements in Japan. After the opening of ports in 1858 foreign merchants started to live in Japan, but the Tycoon's Government forbade them to live among the Japanese and so constructed settlements for them. That in Yokohama was the best known. There, Japanese officials could not enter and also Japanese laws were not applied. Referring to that, Inoue insisted on a crisis of colonisation, because, from his point of view, China had been colonised by the West following the construction of foreign settlements.⁶⁴³ The historian Shiso Hattori supported Inoue by also stressing the existence of the foreign settlements.⁶⁴⁴ Inoue concluded that because foreigners controlled the administration, the police force and security matters in the foreign settlements, Japanese sovereignty had been severely infringed by them.⁶⁴⁵ To prove this, he pointed to the fact that during Japan's civil war the British Minister, Harry Parkes, ordered British soldiers to be landed to defend the foreign settlement in Yokohama and also, by using British naval force, he refused to allow all except British ships to enter the port of Yokohama.⁶⁴⁶

Inoue's line of argument is understandable, but it would be hard to conclude that his idea was based on logical argument. Indeed, his argument could be refuted by examining the 1858 commercial treaty. For example, when the Tycoon's Government made that treaty it was agreed that when a

⁶⁴³ Ibid., 162.

⁶⁴⁴ Shiso Hattori, *Bakumatsu ni okeru Sekai Jyousei oyobi Gaikou Jijyo* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1933), 30.

⁶⁴⁵ Kiyoshi Inoue, 164.

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid., 169.

Japanese committed a crime against the British, that person should be punished according to Japanese law. Equally, when a British national committed a crime against the Japanese, that person should be punished under British law. Hence both British and Japanese would be subjected to their own country's laws, rather than to that of any other. As a result, it was simply a matter of course that Japanese official administrative powers were not effective within the foreign settlements where foreigners obeyed and were protected by their own laws. Inoue's logic would only be correct if the Government had not agreed that term in the foreign treaties. The Western settlements on the Japanese mainland were created and conducted consistent with agreements and laws.

How about Parkes's use of military force to defend the Yokohama settlement? Inoue cited this as undoubted proof of the invasion of Japanese sovereignty.⁶⁴⁷ Since military activity in a foreign state is normally considered to be illegal, Inoue was technically correct. However, as Inoue acknowledged, Parkes used the British soldiers to defend the settlement; his intention was not to join the Japanese civil war. The British army never marched to Edo, so the argument that Parkes infringed upon Japanese sovereignty is hardly plausible. Furthermore, Parkes's decision was considered to be unavoidable because, at that time, the Tycoon's Government had disintegrated. In 1867, when Tokugawa Yoshinobu returned his political authority to the Imperial Court, his Government was nominally ended and after the Battle of Toba-Fushimi in 1868 it totally collapsed. As a result, the

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid., 169.

foreigners in Japan faced a crisis because the Government which had guaranteed their lives and properties was gone and they would now have to defend themselves. In fact, Ohkubo Toshiaki, who was a grandson of Ohkubo Toshimichi, showed a report which had been sent by Parkes on 9 April 1868, the main content of which was that the magistrate of Kanagawa had requested support from Parkes. The main reasons for his request were:

1. By virtue of the surrender of Tokugawa Yoshinobu to the Imperial Court, the magistrate of Kanagawa lost his legal status and as a result he could not maintain the security of Yokohama.
2. He had tried to transfer his duties to the new government but nobody had been sent from the Imperial Court.
3. Against the Imperial army, which had been advancing on Edo, the magistrate of Kanagawa was powerless, so he could protect neither Japanese nor foreigners from the flames of war.⁶⁴⁸

Considering this, it can be deduced that the reason why Parkes ordered the British army to defend Yokohama was not to join the civil war but to protect the foreigners in the foreign settlement. Indeed, Ohkubo supported Parkes by concluding that for the purpose of defending British trade with the Japanese, Parkes had to defend the port of Yokohama whatever the situation.⁶⁴⁹ Parkes and the other Western representatives and officials had to withdraw from Osaka and Hyogo right after the battle because the

⁶⁴⁸ Toshiaki Ohkubo, *Meiji Ishin no Seiji Katei* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Koubunkan, 1986), 96.

⁶⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 100.

Government could no longer guarantee their security, which was partly why Parkes took quick action to defend the foreign settlement in Yokohama.

The second proof of the colonisation crisis which Inoue referred to was the existence of Ernest Satow. Tokutomi Soho, recognised as a major figure in Japanese historiography, was the first to point out, in 1936, his secret relationship with Satsuma samurai, Saigo Takamori, and, since then, Japanese historians have followed this idea. As a result, in modern Japan, Satow has been sometimes thought of as a spy working to facilitate Japan's colonisation by the British. There was no proof for this, but Inoue also took that line. Inoue insisted that before the civil war Satow had suggested to Saigo that if the latter needed their help, the British would always respond to him.⁶⁵⁰ Saigo responded that Japan's future regime should be decided by the Japanese, thereby rejecting Satow's proposal.⁶⁵¹ Inoue used this supposed episode to show how Saigo's nationalist attitude was truly magnificent compared with that of the Government's limp diplomacy.⁶⁵² Yet what was the background to Inoue's conclusion? Inoue insisted that the French supported the Tycoon's Government in economic ways whereas, on the contrary, the British supported Satsuma and Choshu in order to have greater political influence over the new regime after the civil war.⁶⁵³ Inoue's analysis of British diplomacy was therefore that it sought to construct a puppet regime in Japan and Satow became symbolic of this conspiracy. Inoue

⁶⁵⁰ Kiyoshi Inoue, 254.

⁶⁵¹ Ibid., 255.

⁶⁵² Ibid., 255.

⁶⁵³ Ibid., 197.

mentioned and praised Saigo in order to promote his idea that, without Saigo, the Japanese would have been colonised by Western states.

But what value has Inoue's argument? In 1865, when Parkes went as Minister to Japan, the British Government ordered him not to become involved in Japanese domestic affairs and furthermore, except in any crisis which threatened British subjects' lives and properties, he was not allowed to use military force — and even then he was required to inform the Government. Parkes, therefore, had no discretion regarding either diplomacy or the use of military power. Indeed, when his predecessor, Rutherford Alcock, had authorized the bombardment of Shimonoseki in 1864 without official approval, he was transferred to China. Previously, in 1862, the British had publicly shown their official diplomatic attitude when Layard sent an official statement to the Admiralty regarding Russell's opinion. It concerned Russell's approval to use the British naval force present in Edo Bay to protect the British Legation in Edo.⁶⁵⁴ This statement meant that since the conclusion of the treaties with the Tycoon, the British Government did not approve any use of military force except in an emergency. Thus, even when the Japanese moved towards civil war, the British did not change their diplomacy. Although it was true that Parkes and Satow met many Japanese feudal lords and samurais, that did not mean they interfered in Japanese domestic affairs. They were merely gathering or confirming information by which to analyse Japanese politics. As for Satow's reported offer of support to Saigo, although since Tokutomi Soho many Japanese historians have

⁶⁵⁴ FO410/2, Layard to the Secretary of the Admiralty, 25 July 1862.

mentioned this episode, it should be regarded as simply a method of honouring Saigo and asserting the “patriotic” spirit of the Meiji Restoration.

Hattori was another who insisted that Satow was agitating to cause the civil war. He focused on *Eikoku Sakuron*. He highlighted the passage about the possibility of excluding the Tycoon, who had been illegally parading as Japan’s national sovereign, and concluded that Satow had justified the Restoration on the grounds of restoring ancient rule.⁶⁵⁵ Hattori claimed that Satow clearly interfered in Japanese domestic affairs by simply writing such a thing. Technically, perhaps, that was correct, although Satow was recognized as a British official who was an expert in Japanese language, culture and tradition. Hattori would be correct, perhaps, if Satow had clearly justified the Restoration. But did he?

Some Japanese have clearly misunderstood the content of *Eikoku Sakuron*. True, Satow did argue that removing the Tycoon from the position of national sovereign would be legal, but he never indicated a constitutional monarchy as the future Japanese regime. Furthermore, Satow did not insist on a Restoration which would recover imperial authority; he advised the Confederate Daimios under the Mikado, thereby indicating that feudal elements would remain appropriate for the future regime. Could this be defined as the essence of modernization? It could not be so, because Daimio symbolized the feudal structure. Thus, by advocating the Confederate Daimios, it could scarcely be said that the Japanese could move much towards modernization influenced by Satow’s essay. In that respect, Satow

⁶⁵⁵ Shiso Hattori, 45.

could not be defined as infringing on Japanese affairs, and Hattori's argument could be correct only if Satow had insisted either on a constitutional monarchy devoid of feudalistic elements or if he had argued for something which would have obstructed Japan's effort to modernize.

When Satow wrote *Eikoku Sakuron* in 1866, however, the Japanese were not promoting modernization. Again, then, could nineteenth-century Japanese possibly have thought Satow to be interfering in Japanese domestic affairs? It is hard to believe. In fact, any Japanese influenced by Satow's thinking would have envisaged Japan's future as remaining essentially feudal rather than that which developed after the foundation of the Meiji Government. In fact, in his diary on 19 August 1867 Satow wrote that on another day a samurai from the Tycoon's Government asked Satow to provide a counter argument to *Eikoku Sakuron*.⁶⁵⁶ However, Satow did not write about this topic in his diary anymore, so, it is hard to know whether they argued further or not. From this diary entry, though, it can be argued that Satow was antagonistic towards the Tycoon's Government, and, as a result, *Eikoku Sakuron* could be defined as an anti-regime essay. Yet, it is hard to view Satow's essay as being either revolutionary or as interfering in Japanese politics before the civil war. Indeed, after the civil war, the Japanese created a constitutional monarchy under the Emperor Meiji instead of the political structure which Satow had suggested. Hattori is therefore not correct to criticise Satow for involvement in Japan's domestic affairs.

⁶⁵⁶ PRO30/33/15/2, Satow Diary, 19 August 1867.

Compared with the books written by Inoue, Shibahara and Hattori, those by Yuzo Akiyama in 2000 and Jiro Chaya in 2004 were academically light weight. However, they were effective from the view point of understanding how the Japanese generally analyse events and what they think about Satow and British diplomacy during the Meiji Restoration.

Like Hattori, Akiyama took the position that *Eikoku Sakuron* was symbolic of British involvement in Japanese domestic affairs. Akiyama insisted that after Satow had completed writing *Eikoku Sakuron*, he requested the assistance of Awa samurai, Numata Torajiro, and already intended to enter into Japanese affairs.⁶⁵⁷ Akiyama concluded that if Satow did not intend to do so, he would have published his name.⁶⁵⁸ Officially, Satow never admitted writing *Eikoku Sakuron*, even in his memoirs, so it is hard to be certain of his motive. Thus, the analysis provided by Akiyama could be justified. However, Akiyama advances his argument often by guesswork, to the point where *Eikoku Sakuron* is assumed to be the consensus view within the British Legation. By using that method, he concluded that the British had become involved in Japanese internal affairs. As proof, he insisted that Satow had not been punished for writing *Eikoku Sakuron*.⁶⁵⁹ Can this analysis be recognized as fair? As Akiyama admitted, Satow wrote it in anonymity, so how could all the staff at the British Legation have known about it in so short a period? Modern Japanese who

⁶⁵⁷ Yuzo Akiyama, *Atarashii Nihon no Katachi* (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobo, 2005), 75.

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid., 75.

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid., 76.

research the Meiji Restoration accept that it was written by Satow, but Japanese in the nineteenth century could not recognize that so easily. Not surprisingly, Satow was not rebuked at the Legation.

Satow probably did not write the truth in his memoir, but Inoue wrote what he believed to be true in his 1936 book when he reflected on Satow's memoir. According to Inoue, he had joined the team to translate Satow's memoir into Japanese, which was completed successfully. It was printed, but when the schedule shifted to the bookbinding stage everything had to be stopped. The vice-president of the committee for the edition, Tsugihisa Kurosawa, ordered the elimination of all the passages which mentioned the Emperor, imperial family and the imperial system. As a result, the content of the book was significantly changed. Furthermore, it was planned to publish 2000 copies. However, those were not allowed to be sold publicly and were delivered only to people associated with the book. The remainder was held in storage at the Ministry of Education, after which Inoue did not know what happened to them.⁶⁶⁰ Inoue's experience was valuable to understand the Japanese attitude towards Satow's memoir; only after 1945 was Satow's memoir translated fully and published. Because Satow mentioned the Emperor and the imperial system in his memoir, the Japanese government feared that ordinary people might discover that the foreigners had already been discussing the role of the Emperor. That was what the government had been hiding for the purpose of protecting imperial authority. This episode proved one fact though: although several decades had passed, ordinary

⁶⁶⁰ Kiyoshi Inoue, 111.

Japanese people still could not read the complete version of Satow's memoir before the Second World War.

Akiyama might counter-argue that at the time of the Meiji Restoration a translated version of *Eikoku Sakuron* had already been published so obviously some Japanese could read that. In fact, he stressed that.⁶⁶¹ The translated version at the time of the Meiji Restoration was indeed preserved. That, however, does not mean that the majority of Japanese people had already read it. If *Eikoku Sakuron* was already widely known in Japan then why did so much debate arise about whether *Eikoku Sakuron* should be defined as a milestone in Japanese modernization? As already described, Satow urged the Confederate Daimios under imperial authority, yet the Meiji Government did not do what Satow had advised. Furthermore, Satow criticised the Tycoon for behaving as the national sovereign of Japan, but he did not agitate for the collapse of the Tycoon's Government. Therefore, Japanese in the nineteenth century who had read the translated version of *Eikoku Sakuron* were more likely to believe that the Meiji Government did not follow *Eikoku Sakuron* and were unlikely to regard his essay as a milestone in modernization. In fact, although some Japanese undoubtedly read it, *Eikoku Sakuron* did not have the same psychological impact then as it has had since with modern Japanese readers. It might be not the nineteenth-century Japanese but more recent Japanese who have been influenced by Satow's criticism of the Tycoon.

⁶⁶¹ Akiyama, 77.

Akiyama argues that the background to why *Eikoku Sakuron* was spread among the Japanese at the time was that the feudal lords and their retainers gained confidence that the British would encourage the collapse of the Tycoon's Government.⁶⁶² Akiyama also claimed that with the emergence of *Eikoku Sakuron*, the Japanese and British could agree a common interest because the Japanese expected British support while the British wished to have political influence in the new regime.⁶⁶³ However, these ideas would be hard to endorse because, first of all, the British had made their commercial treaty with the Tycoon's Government and therefore had no reason to wish for the collapse of that Government. Furthermore, any new regime established if that Government collapsed would be of uncertain political ability. Britain's main focus was on commercial activity in Japan, with no intention of involvement in Japanese affairs. The British would never choose an option which might create anarchy. Although the Tycoon's Government was old fashioned, it still had administrative power in Japan and the British would likely always value it more than any regime which consisted merely of anti-Tycoon feudal lords. In short, the British needed the Tycoon's Government to uphold the 1858 Treaty.

Jiro Chaya's stance as a historian, in 2004, was to insist on British influence in the Meiji Restoration, but his method of argument was different from that of previous scholars. He claimed that Parkes knew that Satow had written *Eikoku Sakuron*⁶⁶⁴ although he did not indicate any proof for that

⁶⁶² Ibid., 77.

⁶⁶³ Ibid., 77.

⁶⁶⁴ Jiro Chaya, *1868 nen Owari no Hajimari* (Tokyo: Koudansha, 2004), 154.

and his opinion appears to be based on pure hypothesis. Then, after insisting on the above, Chaya concluded that Parkes had excluded Satow from diplomatic work.⁶⁶⁵ The reason for this was because if the Japanese pursued modernization by following the plan of *Eikoku Sakuron*, the British would lose their influence with the new regime.⁶⁶⁶ According to that logic, Satow was side-lined by Parkes and Mitford. Consequently, Chaya concluded, the Japanese could not establish any idea of a democratic society.⁶⁶⁷ Also, according to Chaya, Satow was considered to have made an effort to support the Mikado by the use of military power.⁶⁶⁸ Can this analysis reflect any truth?

The one link between Akiyama and Chaya was to identify *Eikoku Sakuron* as a milestone for Japanese modernization. However, as already discussed, could any new regime which maintained feudal elements ever be defined as modernized? Satow's idea was never adopted because soon after the civil war all feudal status and lands were abolished, which would suggest that the Japanese were not greatly influenced by Satow's essays. This is another indication that *Eikoku Sakuron* could not really have served as an important milestone for Japanese modernization. So why did Chaya point to Satow as above? Partly because there is a general tendency in modern Japan to single out Satow as a major contributor to the Meiji Restoration, and Chaya simply conforms to the idea that without Satow the Japanese could not have modernized. However, as a translator and junior official it is hard to

⁶⁶⁵ Ibid., 273.

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid., 273.

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid., 273.

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid., 273.

believe that Satow had any political influence or that his essays really had much impact on either the Japanese or the British. Honouring Satow's role, based largely on second guessing, has been the work of modern Japanese writers. When, in April 1867 and January 1868, Tokugawa Yoshinobu met the British representative, Parkes spoke for British diplomacy, not Satow – a true reflection of Satow's unimportant standing. Could the Japanese seriously have expected or entrusted a foreign diplomat so junior to help establish a modern regime? And could Satow have possibly made any offer or decision to support the Mikado by using the British military?

The evaluation of Satow by Akiyama and Chaya represents the common perception of Satow by present-day Japanese. However, this attitude must be considered to be a mistake. Not only nineteenth-century Japanese but also modern Japanese historiography assumed that Satow was given a significant political influence and also that his status placed him next to the British Minister in the Legation. But one thing must be made clear. In the 1860s, although Satow worked at the British Legation, his status was consular. That meant he was a staff member of the British consulate in Yokohama which was of lower status than the Legation.⁶⁶⁹ His diplomatic standing was thereby lower than that of Mitford. The latter worked at the British Legation in the diplomatic service.

⁶⁶⁹ Barr gives one example of Satow's routine work. It was that Neale greatly aggravated Satow by making him copy out the despatches every morning instead of letting him do his real job, which was to learn Japanese. (Pat Barr, *The Coming of the Barbarians – A Story of Western Settlement in Japan 1853-1870* (London: Macmillan, 1967), 154).

Why, then, did such a misunderstanding occur? Michael R. Auslin, the American historian and Japanologist, explained the background. It was that until 1867 there was no Japanese word which expressed “consul”.⁶⁷⁰ Thus the Japanese might understandably, but wrongly, have believed that because Satow had worked at the British Legation he was also a member of the diplomatic service. That misunderstanding affects even modern Japanese historiography. Akiyama and Chaya might not have appreciated that fact, but that was not entirely their fault. That misunderstanding had already begun in the 1860s.

Reviewing the above arguments, it seems clear that those historians who claimed that there was a crisis relating to foreign colonisation in the 1860s do not support their conclusions with any worthwhile evidence. Their arguments are based either on bias or on an extremely narrow point of view. How, then, did Shigeki Tohyama, who in 1951 claimed that the crisis never existed for nineteenth-century Japan, promote his argument?

Tohyama did not analyse historical incidents in the same way, explaining instead the cultural background to why the existence of such a crisis had to be emphasised. As already discussed, Tohyama asserted that before the Second World War, nobody had been allowed to research and discuss either the Emperor or the imperial system. This, he insisted, had led to the common historical misunderstanding that there was a colonisation crisis in nineteenth-century Japan. Tohyama also claimed that pre-modern Japanese history, including that of the time of the Meiji Restoration,

⁶⁷⁰ Michael R. Auslin, *Negotiating with Imperialism – The Unequal Treaties and the Culture of Japanese Diplomacy* (Harvard University Press, 2006), 25.

remained an uncultivated area of scholarship in Japan,⁶⁷¹ which he characterized as follows:

1. All the primary materials were not publicly available.
2. Those few materials which were opened, were not academically analysed and properly discussed.
3. Most were one-sided editions produced by the owners.
4. Even when intentions to translate and make optional selections for an edition might exist, academic correction and argument to revise were not allowed.⁶⁷²

Tohyama therefore concluded that because the Meiji Restoration was widely welcomed, as a result materials came to be used simply to justify political positions taken by the victorious side. Tohyama did not directly refute any crisis of colonisation, but he did conclude that, because of this background, a common version of historical events had simply emerged naturally. His idea made sense. Since the foundation of the Meiji Government, the Japanese had been making efforts to protect the Emperor and imperial system, because any collapse of the imperial system would mean a collapse of Japanese national identity. To avoid that possibility, the Government had to maintain the Emperor as sacred, and that divinity meant that ordinary people were not allowed to discuss imperial affairs. That did not mean the Government prohibited all knowledge. The Government did order an historical edition

⁶⁷¹ Shigeki Tohyama, *Meiji Ishin* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2000), 1.

⁶⁷² *Ibid.*, 1.

about the Meiji Restoration and, as a result, *Fukko-ki* (*The Record of the Recovery of Ancient rule*) was published in 1889. Tohyama, however, defined this as a book which was extremely poor concerning historical accuracy.⁶⁷³ For him, it was proof that the Japanese were only allowed to use limited materials, as edited by the victors of the Restoration.

After 1945, was that traditional attitude changed by the promotion of liberalism? In some respects, it was, but in most cases it was not. Although Japan's political identity was changed, the historical interpretation of the Meiji Restoration did not alter. Tohyama claimed that the reason was that the same vested interest, as in the Meiji Government, still existed in post 1945 Japan.⁶⁷⁴ As a result, historians still tended to analyse the Meiji Restoration without proofs and without an open mind. Tohyama advanced his argument without criticising his opponents. One major reinterpretation concerned the bombardment of Shimonoseki in 1864. He suggested that at that time, the British, French and Dutch had already drawn up a memorandum, the main points of which were a prohibition on demanding Japanese territory or specific concessions and also a prohibition on involvement in both national and local Japanese political affairs.⁶⁷⁵ Unfortunately, Tohyama did not discuss that memorandum in detail, so it could only be regarded as his point of view. Yet after the bombardment the Westerners did not demand any Japanese territory and they maintained that same diplomatic stance throughout the civil war. The existence of such a

⁶⁷³ Ibid., 3.

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid., 3.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid., 116. Writing in 2000, Tohyama probably drew on the 1987 translation of the Prussian diplomat Max von Brandt's account of events (see fn. 626).

memorandum was, therefore, plausible, because had there been no common agreement among the Westerners, the possibility might well have arisen of incidents which the Japanese would no doubt later have been able to claim as proof of colonisation ambitions. Tohyama's argument was counter-argument by an indirect method.

When reviewing the history of the Restoration, the only incident in which the Westerners did use military demonstration was in 1865 when they requested imperial ratification for the 1858 Treaty and the opening of the port of Hyogo. True, the British, French and Dutch sent a fleet to the Sea of Hyogo, but they had no intention of firing on any Japanese cities. They showed their naval power to support diplomacy and to reinforce negotiation. That Parkes had no intention of opening fire was proved by official documents. Thus, although Japanese fears at the time are readily understandable, it is wrong for modern historians to define that incident as proof of a colonisation crisis. Still, some Japanese may counter-argue that although there was no battle or bombardment, the incident might confirm some conspiracy by the Westerners to make Japanese affairs more chaotic. Different Westerners were involved in different ways. Satow mentioned it in *Eikoku Sakuron*.

Tohyama played down the affair. He did not deny Western involvement but he focused on the background of how the Japanese handled that situation. He wrote that from the Tycoon's Government side, rumours were spread whereby, with British support, Satsuma would challenge the Government by taking advantage of this crisis. In the meantime, Satsuma

spread the rumour that the Government had committed treason by making a secret alliance with the foreign Ministers, thereby causing this situation. Their purpose, in both cases, was to criticise and slander their opponents.⁶⁷⁶ For Tohyama, western involvement in Japanese domestic affairs was cited by conflicting Japanese parties merely for the purpose of creating political advantage. By emphasizing the involvement of foreigners on the opposite side, both tried to create a psychological impact on Japanese citizens, and since ordinary Japanese had little access to accurate information, such simple rumours were likely to be effective. As Tohyama indicated, among nineteenth-century Japanese the most effective propaganda tool was invariably to stress the existence and fear of foreigners.⁶⁷⁷ There is no proof for any of the rumours; nonetheless, the modern insistence on the colonisation crisis must have emerged from them. The samurais of Satsuma, spreading those rumours before the civil war, and then again after the foundation of the Meiji Government, used them for the purpose of sanctifying the Emperor and also for justifying their own political position. Tohyama acknowledged pressure from the Western states, but this, he stated was not for colonisation but for commercial purposes. Foreign pressure was to expand the market for selling their products and to purchase other materials.⁶⁷⁸

⁶⁷⁶ Ibid., 132-133.

⁶⁷⁷ Ibid., 133.

⁶⁷⁸ Ibid., 42.

Indeed, the major purpose of the Western advance into East Asia was to promote commercial activities, and, since Perry, the Westerners had been requesting changes to the Japanese national administrative system which would allow greater international trade. But, they had never undertaken any invasion of Japanese land. In fact, Auslin, defined the attitude of the Western states as follows:

The treaty powers had not come to Japan to colonise, for the country was part of that larger sphere of informal empire tied to Western, mainly British, commercial interests.⁶⁷⁹

There is thus one common point about the diplomacy of the Western states: the Westerners did not have any intention to colonise Japanese regions. More than that, Auslin concludes as follows:

Since Japan was not to be colonised, the Westerners treated Japan from the beginning more “equally” than they did colonised states, such as India, or semi-colonised nations, such as China.⁶⁸⁰

His statement appears to prove one thing: the more the Japanese claimed the possibility of colonisation, the more can be shown the weakness of their analysis of the Meiji Restoration. Had it been otherwise, then Hokkaido might already have been colonised because, before the Meiji era, Hokkaido remained an untended region. Tellingly, the British and Americans constructed a port at the Ogasawara Islands (Bonin Islands in English. Bonin was derived from *Mujin* in Japanese, which means uninhabited).

⁶⁷⁹ Auslin, 7.

⁶⁸⁰ Ibid., 7.

However, once it was confirmed to be originally Japanese land, they withdrew from there, indicating no intention to colonise. Although later Japanese adopted *Eikoku Sakuron* as justification for the collapse of the Tycoon's Government, in reality, it was not. Satow certainly criticised the Government, but that was not for political but for commercial purposes; he considered that because of feudalism, neither Westerners nor Japanese could develop modern commercial activities. Furthermore, not only did Satow avoid involvement in Japanese domestic affairs, he also rejected any approaches from the Japanese side. For example, his conversation with Date Munenari in January 1867 in which Satow rejected any suggestion of British involvement in Japanese domestic affairs on the grounds that a solution to conflict would be even harder to find. Date had then said that he had been considering that Japan should be a confederate state with the Mikado at the head of it, but again Satow answered that whatever his intentions were, it would be none of Britain's business.⁶⁸¹

However, still there was one occasion on which Satow perhaps showed his vanity. In his diary on 6 January 1868 he wrote that what he had argued for in *Eikoku Sakuron* would be the main basis for the future of Japanese politics.⁶⁸² However, this statement is not evidence of his involvement; merely an expression of his feelings, perhaps after he heard the news that Tokugawa Yoshinobu had returned his political authority. He might well have considered that the political situation would now be influenced by what he had argued in *Eikoku Sakuron*.

⁶⁸¹ PRO30/33/15/2, Satow Diary, 8 January 1867.

⁶⁸² PRO30/33/15/2, Satow Diary, 6 January 1868.

More than that, Satow wrote of his indignation on 8 January 1868 when Koba Dennai, who was a samurai of Satsuma, visited him and asked if he knew whether the army of the ex-Tycoon's Government would advance to Kyoto or not. Satow replied that he knew nothing.⁶⁸³ However, in his diary, he asked: what made them think that he would let them know such information?⁶⁸⁴ From this incident, though, it does seem clear that by the start of 1868 the Japanese had already come to believe that the British were on the side of Satsuma. The Westerners always focused on commercial activities, and although political pressure was sometimes applied, it cannot be concluded that it was evidence for colonialism. That was Tohyama's point, in essence, and Ishii later supported it. Tohyama promoted his argument using indirect methods—the same by which other Japanese scholars have defined Western diplomacy as that of colonialism.

The major difference between the modern historians who claim the existence of the colonisation crisis and those who deny its existence is whether they used Western primary materials or not. The major materials of the former are either Japanese secondary material or, if they used primary materials, only those which were edited by the Meiji Government. On the contrary, the latter used Western primary materials, so their point of view and method of analysis are totally different. There is also a difference when developing historical argument. The former first determined the conclusion and then advanced argument to move towards that goal, which means that,

⁶⁸³ PRO30/33/15/2, Satow Diary, 8 January 1868.

⁶⁸⁴ Ibid.

although they tried to promote historical analysis, they used only the limited materials which would be effective to reach their predetermined conclusion. By contrast, the latter analysed historical incidents and then reached a conclusion after the argument. Unfortunately, the latter remain minor in Japanese historiography because the threat from western colonialism is deeply ingrained in Japanese historical understanding. To escape that mindset, the use of Western primary materials and official documents will, at the very least, be necessary, hard as it is to access such materials while remaining in Japan.

Nevertheless, Japan's major historians should not be seen simply as stubborn. Certainly their point of view has been narrow, but their efforts have been inspired by a perceived need to defend and justify the Emperor and the imperial system. For that purpose, a traditional interpretation of the Meiji Restoration has been essential. The Meiji Restoration was when Japan's modern identity was established, and, since then, the Japanese have shared the same idea about the Emperor. If this idea collapsed, modern Japanese identity would be diminished. Therefore, historians must justify the Restoration-even if it is not by impartial analysis. Perhaps, therefore, their attitude should not be overly criticised. Their attitude reflects and reinforces how modern Japanese consider themselves, their society, and the cohesion provided by the Imperial system since the Restoration.

The reason why not only nineteenth-century Japanese but also present-day Japanese have consistently honoured the Meiji Government is because the new regime became the symbol of Japanese modernization.

Under the Meiji regime the Japanese could gain a truly national identity. Acknowledging benefit from the Meiji Government also reflected criticism of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Indeed, to appreciate the success of Japan's modernization, it became obligatory to criticise the Tokugawa Shogunate severely, to the extent that constitutional monarchy came to be accepted as a form of social justice whereas feudalism was a universal vice. As Hellyer wrote:

In the new environment of the Meiji period, however, there was no place for such positive interpretations of the fallen Tokugawa regime.⁶⁸⁵

Hellyer's statement nevertheless is evidence that not all historians considered the Meiji regime to be better than the Tokugawa Shogunate. Hellyer did admit a contrast between the Tycoon's Government and the attitude of Satsuma when the Westerners came to Japan in the nineteenth century. He claimed that although the former recognised the potential benefit of commercial activities, they could not develop them well.⁶⁸⁶ Satsuma, meanwhile, succeeded in developing "their own industrialization".⁶⁸⁷ It was on the basis of Satsuma's approach that a high evaluation of the Meiji Restoration as a whole spread widely among the Japanese.

⁶⁸⁵ Robert I. Hellyer, *Defining Engagement—Japan and Global Contexts, 1640-1868* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2009), 249.

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid., 185.

⁶⁸⁷ Ibid., 186.

However, it was significant that although the Meiji Government had been founded, not everything was done smoothly. The main reason for that was the absence of any new leader who could direct this new society. Auslin has stated that although it was at the very end of the Tokugawa Shogunate, in fact Tokugawa Yoshinobu was the person most able to recognise the complexities of international diplomacy.⁶⁸⁸ Of course, once the Tycoon's Government fell, he would inevitably lose his feudal status, but had the Meiji Government used him as a leading politician, what might the Meiji regime have become? Japanese modernization might have been promoted in a different way. That was, albeit unconsciously for many Japanese a question to be asked about the Meiji Restoration, and, of course, an issue which would always be hard to analyse despite Japan becoming a liberal state.

Chapter XI: Conclusion

Historical understanding of Ernest Satow and of British diplomacy during the period of the Meiji Restoration has been changed by this research. Until now, their roles have been little questioned in Japan. However, traditional ideas among the Japanese have rested largely on their own sense of values rather than objective analysis derived from the use of Western official material and primary sources. Satow's significance must therefore be reconsidered. It had been long believed that *Eikoku Sakuron* was a major

⁶⁸⁸ Auslin, 143.

contribution to modernization, made possible because Satow had learned the language, and knew about Japanese cultures and customs. By focusing on this, the notion took hold that, without him, the Japanese could neither have recognised what was essential for modernization nor achieved it in such a short period. This notion is widespread within Japanese academic circles, regardless of whether Satow is honoured or criticised for interfering in Japanese domestic affairs.

This fresh evaluation of his importance stems firstly from detailed analysis of *Eikoku Sakuron* itself. Modern Japanese may well define Satow's essays as a milestone for the country's modernization because at that time the only political structure which the Japanese knew was feudalism, whereas the essays drew attention to the existence of the Mikado and concluded that there was a hierarchy which the Mikado headed. Of course, in the nineteenth century the Japanese already recognised the Mikado as their spiritual head, albeit not related to secular matters. It was because Satow insisted on the primacy of the Mikado that modern Japanese have judged his analysis to be perceptive. Yet during and after the civil war, when the Japanese themselves created a national monarchy under the Emperor Meiji, did they really require Satow to point out the potential significance of the Mikado?

While Satow rightly defined the Mikado as being head of a national hierarchy, the Japanese nevertheless recognised the Mikado differently from Satow. The latter, after all, urged the Confederate Daimios to serve under

the Mikado and said nothing about a constitutional monarchy. Not only that, when Saigo Takamori presented his idea for a future Japanese political structure essentially modelled on the British structure, Satow thought the idea unworkable—suggesting that Satow was pessimistic about rapid Japanese modernization. Had he considered the possibility of rapid change in Japan, he would surely not have suggested the Confederate Daimios since feudal elements were incompatible with a modern society. For Satow, Japanese politics could only advance step by step, and the Confederate Daimios was the next step for them.

Modern scholars in Japan are able to appreciate this, yet their stance regarding Satow's importance has generally not changed. In fact, that attitude has not changed since the Meiji Restoration when the samurais of Satsuma and Choshu tried to justify their victory in the civil war and after the foundation of the Meiji Government by using Satow's essays as material for their propaganda. Their argument was that because the British had offered a blueprint for modernizing in the essays, it could be achieved and that achieving it was proof that the Meiji regime was properly developed and fit to govern. There was no concern about the contents of *Eikoku Sakuron* in any detail; Satow had pointed out the existence of the Mikado and that was all that was needed as propaganda. Satow thus became a notable figure in the Meiji Restoration narrative. In the meantime, what Satow had truly tried to express was left behind.

There is another reason why *Eikoku Sakuron* has been a focus for the Japanese since the Meiji Restoration. It is that Satow had appeared

specifically to justify the end of the Tycoon's Government in his essays.

While some Japanese praise Satow because, without him, Japan could not move so quickly towards modernization, others criticise him and insist that he had agitated to cause the civil war in an attempt to establish a British puppet regime. Although the purpose of their argument is different, both camps share one idea: Satow had advocated the end of the Tokugawa regime.

However, after careful analysis of *Eikoku Sakuron*, a new understanding is required because Satow did not insist on any such thing. He defined the Tycoon as a feudal lord who governed his hereditary lands, but that did not mean he was the national representative. Considering this point in isolation, it could be surmised that Satow's position was anti-Tycoon. He also concluded that supplanting the Tycoon would not constitute a revolution. Based on those remarks, the Japanese considered him to be a British official justifying the collapse of the Government on the grounds that the political position of the Tycoon's Government was not internationally recognised.

However, it is hard to believe that Satow truly held such political ideas because one important statement which he made to Saigo can be historically confirmed. Satow insisted: the British did not care whether Japan was governed by the Mikado, by the Tycoon or by the Confederate Daimios, but Britain would like to know who the nation's leader was. From that statement, it would be difficult to conclude that Satow agitated for the collapse of the Government. From an international perspective, the Japanese political structure was unclear because both the Mikado and the Tycoon

existed. Satow did not suggest the collapse of the Government: he simply expected the Tycoon to withdraw from the position of national representative. He did not mention whether the Tycoon should be included in the Confederate Daimios, but doubtless simply assumed that would be inevitable because, as he acknowledged, the Tycoon was the wealthiest feudal lord in Japan and so could not be ignored in any new regime. The Japanese have tried to define Satow as either agitator or as a man who could justify the Restoration but, in truth, it is hard to confirm either attitude as historically valid.

After the foundation of the Meiji regime, Japanese politicians constantly tried to emphasise their legitimacy and to justify their actions. Indeed, Ohkubo Toshiaki pointed out the fact that Japanese historiography was connected with governmental projects.⁶⁸⁹ Why did historical projects have to be promoted under government leadership? The main reason was the need to focus on and emphasise the restoration of Imperial rule, whereby the government would have to establish a historical perspective which would completely denigrate earlier feudalism.⁶⁹⁰ For that reason, impartial analysis would not be demanded from subsequent Japanese historiography. For that purpose, Satow proved highly beneficial. Rapid modernization meant many forced changes in Japan which politicians recognised created many potential enemies. Those Japanese who had long possessed a traditional status or vested interests in feudal society were losing everything

⁶⁸⁹ Toshiaki Ohkubo, *Nihon Kindai Shigaku no Seiritsu* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Koubunkan, 1988), 49.

⁶⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 41-42.

in the name of modernization. That was why Meiji politicians cited Satow to insist that it was a neutral outsider who had identified what was necessary for Japan. Hence *Eikoku Sakuron* received excessive attention, and as time passed the more the truth about Satow and his essays became either distorted or forgotten.

In fact, Satow did not write anything about the constitution, the Diet, political parties, or the ministerial system. It was not until 1890 that the first imperial diet and the constitution were formed. This was almost 30 years after the civil war. The Japanese thereby needed a long time to establish their modern political structure, which refuted the idea that they could achieve modernization influenced by *Eikoku Sakuron* in a short period. Furthermore, what the Japanese eventually achieved bore little relation to what Satow had advocated a quarter-century before.

A second factor indicating the need to re-evaluate Satow's standing relates to the background to *Eikoku Sakuron*. When first considering how Satow could write such excellent essays, there seems always one obvious answer: because Satow was steeped in Japanese culture without which he could not have written *Eikoku Sakuron*, so clearly reflecting aspects of Japan's national identity. However, when researching the era of the Meiji Restoration, without focusing on him, the following historical facts remain:

1. Vice-admiral James Hope reported to the Admiralty as early as 1862 that a pamphlet which claimed that the Tycoon was not the national sovereign

of Japan was widely distributed in Yokohama.

2. Although in March 1866 Satow's first essay was printed in *The Japan Times*, Satsuma samurai Matsuki Kouan expressed almost same idea in London at the same time.
3. Satow and Matsuki are considered to have both referred to the same material, which was the memorandum written by Rutherford Alcock in 1864.
4. The representative of the Swiss commission, Aime Humbert, who visited Japan for ten months in 1864, had already examined why the Tycoon could not be the national representative of Japan.
5. The Prussian commission, which visited Japan for about half a year in 1860-61, reported that the Tycoon could govern only his hereditary lands.

By 1862, when Satow came to Japan, astute Westerners had therefore already recognised that the Tycoon was not the national sovereign.

Demonstrably, Satow was not the first foreigner to notice that.

Both nineteenth-century and modern Japanese have therefore shared the same mistaken idea that *Eikoku Sakuron* was Satow's original analysis. In 1866 Satow was only 23 years old, and although a university graduate and accomplished linguist, he was only a junior at the British Legation, working predominantly as a translator and not dealing with diplomatic matters. Reviewing the above historical facts, Satow clearly did not reach original conclusions. While Hope's report and Alcock's memorandum were not made public, the accounts by both Humbert and the Prussian staff were

published in 1864—two years before *Eikoku Sakuron*. And because he worked at the British Legation, there was every possibility that Satow had read Alcock's 1864 memorandum too. Japanese scholars, however, do not focus on this. Only one historian, Takashi Ishii, who does not follow the Japanese orthodox idea about the Meiji Restoration, has pointed out the similarity between Satow and Matsuki's idea, and suggested that they might both be influenced by Alcock's memorandum.⁶⁹¹ It is certain that Satow wrote *Eikoku Sakuron*, but in doing so he did not indicate the materials he used. Despite the historical evidence, nevertheless the Japanese have never wished to discuss the possibility that this British blueprint for Japanese modernization, and its apparent justification for the Meiji Restoration, was not all Satow's original work.

There is no intention here to denigrate Satow; he did assist the Japanese in the nineteenth century to understand essential aspects of modernization. However, one thing must be remembered: since the Meiji Restoration the truth about Satow has not been discussed without difficulties. Modern Japanese have made little attempt to challenge or redefine his standing, following instead the guidelines which the Meiji Government set. Whatever their belief about Satow's role, Japanese historians generally know little about his work and ideas in any detail.

Contributing to this background whereby the Japanese developed a restricted mind-set regarding Satow were the books written by Tokutomi Soho. As has already been argued, by praising the Meiji Restoration

⁶⁹¹ Ishii, *Meiji Ishin to Gaiatsu*, 205.

Tokutomi tried to establish absolutism for the Emperor Meiji and Imperial family. He wrote that the Mikado was not only the national sovereign but also the symbol of Japanese identity and was at the core of Japanese society.⁶⁹² In other words, for the purpose of reinforcing a sense of Japanese nationalism, this element was required to overcome the threat to Japan. In that situation, the role of the Mikado would be strengthened. Thus, although Tokutomi might have recognised the value of British civilization, he nevertheless took advantage of British diplomacy for the purpose of endorsing the Meiji Restoration. As a result, his analysis of Satow has led to misunderstanding and bias among the Japanese.

In 1945, however, when the Japanese surrendered, Tokutomi's career and reputation as the leading Japanese historian ended. He had always believed that his major duty was to raise the fighting spirit, hence he had contributed support for the war without any hesitation.⁶⁹³ Thus, the defeat of the Japanese in World War II was also the defeat of Tokutomi in terms of raising the spirit of nationalism.⁶⁹⁴ In fact, since the 1890s and subsequent Russo-Japanese war, he had followed and written about Japanese imperialism, and, as a result, he had acquiesced in the censorship of various ideas.⁶⁹⁵ However, in his 1952 book, *Shorisha no Hiai* (*The Tragedy of Victor*), he returned to his original ideas about the foreign relationship with Japan during the Meiji Restoration.⁶⁹⁶ Now Tokutomi denied the possibility

⁶⁹² Omata, 326.

⁶⁹³ Yonehara, 228.

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid., 228.

⁶⁹⁵ Vinh, 156.

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid., 166.

of colonisation in the nineteenth century which he had previously suggested for the purpose of boosting Japanese nationalism. Yet although he changed his analysis regarding colonisation, concepts about Satow and British diplomacy, which had been mainly defined by him, did not change. Modern Japanese historians have still largely accepted Tokutomi's analysis, despite the more liberal academic environment established after 1945.

From this research, the traditional Japanese notion of British diplomacy during the Meiji Restoration must also be changed. In the past, it has been based on Japanese assumptions and was not based on an impartial attitude. The Japanese have commonly believed that the British supported Satsuma-Choshu whereas the French supported the Tycoon. Britain's intention was to establish a puppet regime under their political influence, and that if the civil war had continued Japan would have become colonised by them. This is orthodox Japanese historiography.

However, official British documents clearly show otherwise. The British Government ordered both Alcock and Parkes not to associate themselves with Japanese domestic affairs and also prohibited the use of military force except where British subjects were in danger. That was apparent after the bombardment of Shimonoseki in 1864 when Alcock was transferred because he had used naval power when British subjects were not in danger. Meanwhile, Parkes had kept to the other official guideline and confirmed that he had never interfered in any Japanese domestic matter.

The truth was that the British focused only on commercial activities in Japan; they did not care much about Japanese political affairs.

Yet though official documents appear to prove it, the Japanese do not admit that interpretation of British diplomacy and many remain convinced that Britain provoked civil war with a view to eventual colonisation. This notion of a British threat is again related to the justification required by the Meiji Government and for its abolition of feudalism. Defending the government in 1891 against criticism that it was dominated by Satsuma-Choshu, the Minister of War, Kabayama Sukenori, himself from Satsuma, lectured the imperial Diet on events a generation earlier. Who had provided then for the security of the state? It was the Daimios and samurais of Satsuma and Choshu who had created the new political order in Japan and thereby saved the nation not only from domestic chaos but also from international encroachment.⁶⁹⁷ His speech was a good example of how statesmen of the Meiji era justified the regime. A foreign danger made the greatest impact, and the more the regime relied upon its impact, the more its existence became essential. As a result, to meet the new regime's expectations, historians and scholars worked to establish a historiography which bolstered the drive for modernization. Related to this, Satow was also used by the Japanese in a one-sided manner. He was supposed to have told Saigo that the British could send troops to support Satsuma in a civil war. The Japanese regard this as true even though there is no evidence and no-one at the British Legation, in fact, could have committed the British

⁶⁹⁷ Goro Hani, *Meiji Ishin* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1956), 101.

army in that way. Even Parkes had to report to London any use of military force, so how could Satow have taken such a decision? Yet Japanese scholarship still largely keeps to the traditional line; justification for the Restoration still overrides proper academic scrutiny.

More than that, because the Meiji Restoration of the late 1860s was more a change of political regime and was not a movement for the modernization of Japan in the strict sense of the word, Satow and British diplomacy were always analysed for the benefit of Japanese historiography. One good example of that is provided by the analysis of Austrian diplomat, Alexander von Huebner. He visited Japan in 1871 for the purpose of establishing diplomatic relations with the Meiji Government, and, with the guidance of Satow, Huebner met many leading Japanese figures. At the time, Huebner asked the question: "What could be the reason for the success of the Meiji Restoration?" Only Iwakura Tomomi, who was an ex-Court noble and who also became one of the major figures in the Meiji Restoration, gave him a clear answer. He answered: The Tycoon became loathed by Japanese citizens because the Japanese had always maintained an absolute loyalty and respect for the Mikado who alone was the legal national sovereign of Japan.⁶⁹⁸ Iwakura's answer represented not only the conviction of nineteenth-century Japanese but also the common position in Japanese historiography. In fact, in the present, the Emperor is defined in academic works as political victor who defeated the *ancien regime* and also as the

⁶⁹⁸ Alexander F. V. Huebner, Shinichi Ichikawa and Masahiro Matsumoto (trans.), *Promenade autour du Monde 1871 par M. le Baron de Huebner, Vol. II* (Tokyo: Shijunbutsu Ouraisha, 1988), 228.

pinnacle of the Japanese race, history and religion, even with status as liberator.⁶⁹⁹ However, Iwakura's assessment, although it was the basis for the interpretation of the Mikado in Japanese historiography, was rejected by Huebner at the time. The following were his reasons for doing so:

1. If the Japanese had really possessed such a respectful view of the Mikado and in such a way, why were they subjected to usurpers for seven hundred years?
2. Furthermore, during such a long period, there seemed to be no loyalty for the Mikado in public, so how did that attitude emerge so suddenly in such a short period? ⁷⁰⁰

Using those two questions, Huebner refuted the definition of the Mikado provided by the Japanese in 1871. He claimed that the existence of the Mikado was just one element in Japanese national identity and that it was nothing but a necessary charm with which to control the people.⁷⁰¹ As evidence for this idea, he indicated that in reality the Mikado did not possess political, financial or military powers.⁷⁰² So, even in 1871, Huebner already recognized that the Meiji Restoration was not a modernization process but rather a political struggle. That was why he concluded that there was no specific definition for the Meiji Restoration and that the only thing which

⁶⁹⁹ Akira Tanaka, *Kindai Tennosei heno Michinori* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Koubunkan, 2007), 249.

⁷⁰⁰ Huebner, 228.

⁷⁰¹ Ibid., 255.

⁷⁰² Ibid., 255.

had changed was the address of the Mikado.⁷⁰³ By analysing Huebner's observations, it can be said that the Meiji Restoration itself was a deceit, and that is the background to why Satow and British diplomacy were invariably discussed unfairly, because nineteenth-century Japanese wished to conceal the truth. This is probably also why in Japanese historiography, all historians possess their own ideas when they argue about the relationship between the nature of the Meiji Restoration and the foundation of the modern Imperial system.⁷⁰⁴ They have never shared one common idea, largely because the truth about events surrounding the Meiji Restoration has never been disclosed in public.

Japanese historiography will also not admit the following assessment stemming from Michael Auslin:

Auslin effectively demonstrates that the leaders of the *bakufu* skilfully used negotiation to temper the diplomatic demands of Western nations in the 1850s and 1860s.⁷⁰⁵

This judgement suggests the idea that the Tycoon's Government might be evaluated higher than the subsequent Meiji regime. Furthermore, according to Auslin, the reason for the collapse of the Tokugawa Shogunate was not due to structural inability but because, by using their military and economic power, the Westerners forced the Tycoon's Government to enter into international politics, thereby giving up national traditions.⁷⁰⁶ By that

⁷⁰³ Ibid., 256.

⁷⁰⁴ Tanaka, *Kindai Tennousei heno Michinori*, 257.

⁷⁰⁵ Hellyer, 10.

⁷⁰⁶ Ibid., 10.

reasoning, the Meiji Restoration began simply because of events and circumstances at the time. In fact, the Swiss Rudolph Lindau (1830-1910), who was in Japan between 1859 and 1862, wrote much the same thing. He was convinced that whatever the situation, the Japanese could not ignore the foreign presence and would have to accept diplomatic relations with the Westerners.⁷⁰⁷ From this situation, though, a brilliant future for Japan might emerge.⁷⁰⁸ It seemed as if Lindau was already predicting the Meiji Restoration. From these ideas, it can be concluded that the Meiji Restoration began largely because of Japan joining the system of international trade.

This research has attempted to change ideas which hitherto have been considered as historical truths. In Japan, it is not easy to access foreign materials, and it has been within and by means of Japanese primary and secondary materials that the arguments and conclusions have been long defined. As a result, there has been little opportunity to challenge orthodoxy and to establish ideas based on new points of view. Furthermore not all Japanese primary materials were made public. All this meant that in terms of the Meiji Restoration, Japanese history would always be interpreted and studied under limited conditions. Even after modernization, officials have reserved matters judged unsuitable for closer analysis, of which the truth about Satow and British diplomacy in the 1860s is a prime example. For the

⁷⁰⁷ Rudolph Lindau, Hideo Morimoto (trans.), *Un voyage autour du Japon* (Tokyo: Shinjinutsu Ourisha, 1986), 134.

⁷⁰⁸ Ibid., 134.

Japanese, the traditional stance in scholarship and public assumptions both justify and help to explain an important era in their past.

Appendix I

Three heroes of the Meiji Restoration

These samurais have been defined as heroes by Japanese historiography because they contributed to the Meiji Restoration not only by

weakening the Tycoon's Government but also by later helping to establish the modern state. The three are Saigo Takamori (1828-77), Ohkubo Toshimichi (1830-78) of Satsuma, and Kido Takayoshi (1833-77) of Choshu. There were, of course, other samurais and Court nobles who contributed to the Meiji Restoration, but since the Meiji regime and until the present these three have been regarded as nationalist heroes. However, it is hard to conclude that only by the action of these three could the Meiji Restoration and the establishment of a modern regime be completed because from among all their political activities there cannot be found any certain vision for the future of Japan. For example, they did not even have the plan which Goto Shojiro had already considered.

Furthermore, from their behaviour and attitudes, doubts emerge about why they might not be heroes. In the case of Saigo, he directed various terrorist attacks in Edo for the purpose of causing civil war at the end of 1867. Also, Ohkubo fiercely rejected the plan whereby Tokugawa Yoshinobu would attend the new regime until after his hereditary regions and noble status were returned to the Imperial Court. At that time, except for them, all Japanese had hoped and made an effort to establish the new regime without any conflict, hence their intrigues to cause the civil war appear unworthy of 'hero' status. At the time of the Meiji Restoration, Kido's name was Katsura Kogoro, but in the 1860s he was called *Kogoro the Runaway*, because on any decisive occasion he had a tendency of not joining in. However, the reason why they were defined as heroes relates to the new regime. The core part of the Meiji regime was founded by the samurais of Satsuma and Choshu, so,

the three needed to be honoured politically to justify and explain the structure of the Meiji regime. Thus they were defined as heroes, although it can be questioned whether they truly contributed much to Japanese modernization.

Appendix II

Four wise feudal lords in the late Tokugawa period

Since the arrival of Perry, Japanese political structures became increasingly fragile because of the weakness of the Tycoon's Government. In

that situation, however, there were four feudal lords, who contributed support for the Tycoon, and Japanese historiography has generally honoured their efforts. These four were Shimazu Nariakira (1809-58) of Satsuma, Matsudaira Yoshinaga (1828-90) of Echizen, Date Munenari (1818-92) of Uwajima, and Yamauchi Toyoshige (1827-72) of Tosa. Shimazu Nariakira died before the Meiji Restoration, so, in detail, he was not considered to have contributed to Japan's modernization, although in an earlier period he had promoted modernization in Satsuma because Western ships had started to show up around Ryukyu (modern Okinawa), which was his dominant region. He was the first, thereby, who recognised the necessity of modernization in Japan, so he became defined as a wise lord. Indeed, had he not promoted modernization in his own territory, Satsuma could not later have become the major influence in the Meiji Restoration.

Matsudaira, Date and Yamauchi, by contrast, were forced into retirement by the *Purge of Ansei* in 1858-59, but after the death of Ii Naosuke (1815-60), who promoting that purge, they returned to national politics. They tried to establish a closer relationship between the Imperial Court and the Tycoon's Government, which was generally recognised as *Koubu-Gattai* (The Unification of the Imperial Court and the Tycoon's Government). By this political structure, Japanese domestic affairs became more stable for a short period. This situation could not last, however, because along side the Tycoon's Government, political figures could not be united. Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu (1837-1913), who became the 15th Shogun, Tokugawa Yoshinobu, asserted that although *Shinpan* and *Tozama* would be

allowed to join national politics, the Tokugawa family should remain the major factor. By contrast, Satsuma recognised a confederation of the feudal lords and considered that the Tycoon should not possess dominant political and economic powers. In fact, the Tycoon and the major feudal lords held two conferences in 1863-64 and 1867, but each time they could not reach agreement; the gap between Tokugawa and Shimazu proved to be fatal. As a result, Satsuma started to distance itself from the Tycoon's Government while Tokugawa strengthened his relationship with Aizu and Kuwana – a relationship that led to the battle of Toba-Fushimi. Thus, although those three feudal lords could briefly establish a new political structure reasonably successfully, they could definitely not promote long-term modernization. Furthermore, although they worked for the establishment of a new regime peacefully, they could not prevent the civil war. Thus, from the viewpoint of promoting Japan's political modernization, they were not considered to be wise feudal lords to any significant degree.

Appendix III

The Purge of Ansei (1858-59)

As described, this was a severe political oppression conducted by Ii Naosuke, *Tairo* of the Tycoon's Government. The nominal reason was to

punish the people who opposed the Treaty of 1858 with Harris. Its origin was when Tokugawa Nariaki, feudal lord of Mito, and his son Yoshiatsu, and also, Tokugawa Yoshikatsu feudal lord of Owari, visited Edo castle to meet with Ii. However, it was not on the designated date. Matsudaira Yoshinaga of Echizen and Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu then criticised Ii for his arbitrary decision. As a result, all of them were forced to retire from politics by Ii, and this was the beginning of the oppression. However, this incident was merely the nominal reason. In reality, the main concern for Ii, and the group of anti-Ii, was who would succeed as 14th Shogun. They saw the political struggle in those terms and did not care so much about the 1858 Treaty without its imperial ratification. The anti-Ii people wanted a good reason for criticizing Ii, and the 1858 Treaty was one such reason. The two groups had different political ideas. Ii and *Fudai* recommended Tokugawa Yoshitomi (1846-66), who was a master of the Kii-Tokugawa family. (He became the 14th Shogun, Tokugawa Iemochi). Meanwhile, the *Shinpan* and *Tozama* recommended Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu, who was a son of Tokugawa Nariaki. (He eventually became the 15th Shogun, Tokugawa Yoshinobu). Each of them had a different political vision. Ii intended to maintain the Tokugawa Shogunate, as established by Tokugawa Ieyasu, so, whatever the situation, he could not allow Yoshinobu to be the 14th Shogun, otherwise, *Shinpan* and *Tozama* would enter into national politics. Yet, since the arrival of Perry, it had become apparent that traditional feudalism could not be maintained, hence, *Shinpan* and *Tozama* had requested a place in national politics and to recommend Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu to be the 14th Shogun was their first

step. Thus, although both groups argued about the 1858 Treaty that was not their main concern and Ii could not compromise at all. As a result, Ii punished all the Japanese who opposed his politics; people who were considered to have planned to import Western values and ideas were punished too since Ii considered that such importation would be the reason for the collapse of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Under his oppression, many Japanese were punished without mercy, and in Japanese history such a severe oppression had never happened before. Thus, it can certainly be said that after 1853 Japanese domestic affairs started to fragment. With Ii's assassination in 1860 the Tycoon's Government lost much of its political authority and as a result the Japanese political system was changed to *Koubu-Gattai*, and *Shinpan* and *Tozama* were allowed to participate in national politics. Furthermore, at the request of the Emperor Komei (1831-67), all the ex-feudal lords (except Tokugawa Nariaki, who had died at the time of being restrained from making any public appearance) were returned to political affairs.

Appendix IV

The contribution of Shibusawa Eiichi

Shibusawa (1840-1931), who was a former samurai of the Tycoon's Government, helped to recover the honour of Tokugawa Yoshinobu by later

interviewing him and also writing books about his life. However, these projects were carried out after his retirement, and the overriding reason why he became famous in Japan was that he had contributed to the establishing of Japanese capitalism. After the foundation of the Meiji Government, he had initially decided to serve Tokugawa Yoshinobu, who had now, of course, retired from politics, but Yoshinobu recommended him to accept his new life, so, Shibusawa decided to contribute to Japanese economic modernization. He had ability and knowledge in finance, especially from his time in France where he had learned about the system of the joint-stock company. This experience became the major aspect of his contribution. In 1869 he attended the Ministry of Finance where he worked for the establishment of weights and measures and also for laws for the foundation of a national bank. In 1873 he resigned because he disputed with the Ministry the terms of the budget. Then he became the CEO of the First National Bank, and directed the founding of local banks. In the meantime, he directed the founding of companies which dealt with gas, insurance, paper-manufacture, railways, cement, hotels, a stock-exchange, spinning and beer. It is said that the number of companies which he created in this way was about five hundred. At the same time, after the foundation of the Meiji regime, various conglomerates (*Zaibatsu* in Japanese) were founded, but he did not found his own because his priority was to promote public, not private benefit. In fact, from his private properties he founded many hospitals and universities for the purpose of supporting socially disadvantaged people and also to educate the young generation for the future good of Japan. By these actions, he was

considered to have contributed significantly to Japanese modernization from an economic point of view, and this is the reason why he came to be honoured as a founder of Japanese capitalism.

Appendix V

Battle at the imperial gate of Hamaguri (20 August 1864)

This is the battle caused by the samurais of Choshu. Before this battle, not only they but also the Court nobles of *Sonno-Jyoi* were exiled from Kyoto,

so, for the purpose of recovering their position, the Choshu army marched to Kyoto and the Imperial Court in 1864. Satsuma and Aizu, however, did not want their recovery, so, they defended the vicinity of the Imperial Court. As a result, serious fighting developed, especially when the Choshu army tried to enter the Imperial Court from the imperial gate of Hamaguri (*Clam* in Japanese). The battle was named after that. The origin of this battle lay with an incident on 30 September 1863 when Satsuma and Aizu had exiled Choshu from Kyoto. Choshu had been the main force at the Imperial Court and their political discipline was *Sonno-Jyoi*. But Satsuma and Aizu were on the side of the Tycoon's Government and their political ideal was *Koubu-Gattai*, so, for them, Choshu was nothing but trouble. Thus, with the support of the Emperor Komei, they exiled the Court nobles supporting Choshu from the Imperial Court and the Choshu army was ordered to leave the Court guard. This incident is called, the *Coup d'état of 18 August* (Japanese calendar) and as a result all the people from Choshu had to leave Kyoto. In the battle Choshu was defeated. After that, the Tycoon's Government planned to crush Choshu completely, and it appeared to be good timing. There was the obvious justification that because the Choshu army had fired on the Imperial Court, they could be defined as the enemy of the state. The first move against Choshu progressed smoothly, but no battle occurred. Choshu surrendered to the Tycoon quickly, and Satsuma did not expect a recovery of the Tycoon's political authority. Thus, because Satsuma had meditated between the Tycoon and Choshu, the planned expedition was not implemented. Nominally, the Tycoon had achieved a success but in the

meantime the Government had lost the opportunity to defeat Choshu completely. The time for victory passed when Satsuma could no longer work with the Tycoon's Government, and started instead to approach Choshu, which also was now hostile to the Tycoon.

The Tycoon's Government formed a second expedition against Choshu, but this time it was disadvantageous for them, because there was no justification for it and also because Satsuma officially refused to join. Still, the Government forced a battle but were heavily defeated. Choshu had imported advanced weapons from the Western states via Satsuma while the weapons of the Tycoon's forces were old-fashioned. As a result, the expedition was cancelled on the pretext of the death of Tokugawa Iemochi, but from its failure it became apparent that the Tycoon's Government could not defeat even just one feudal lord. Thus the second expedition to Choshu symbolized the downfall of the political authority of the Tycoon. One year later Tokugawa Yoshinobu returned his political authority to the Imperial Court. Thus, from that perspective, the battle at the imperial gate of Hamaguri was militarily important for the Meiji Restoration.

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